

The "10th Anniversary Issue"

number 28

THE SICKENER

newyork... 1

volume XI
issue I

\$3 in the U.S.
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WRITTEN
EDITED & PUBLISHED BY
JACK RABID

THE BIG TAKEOVER: % JACK RABID 249 ELDIDGE STREET # 14 NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK 10002 U.S.A.



LIVE: CHILLS, LORD JOHN,
PSYCHEDELIC FURS, ANGRY
SAMOANS, SUNRISE HAMMERS,
S. JACKET FITS, DICKIES,
ARTHUR LEE and BLACKBIRD

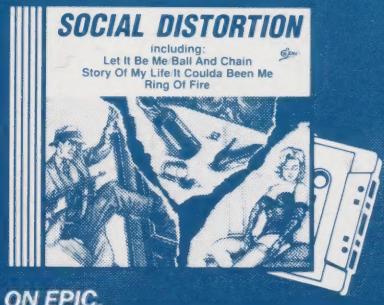
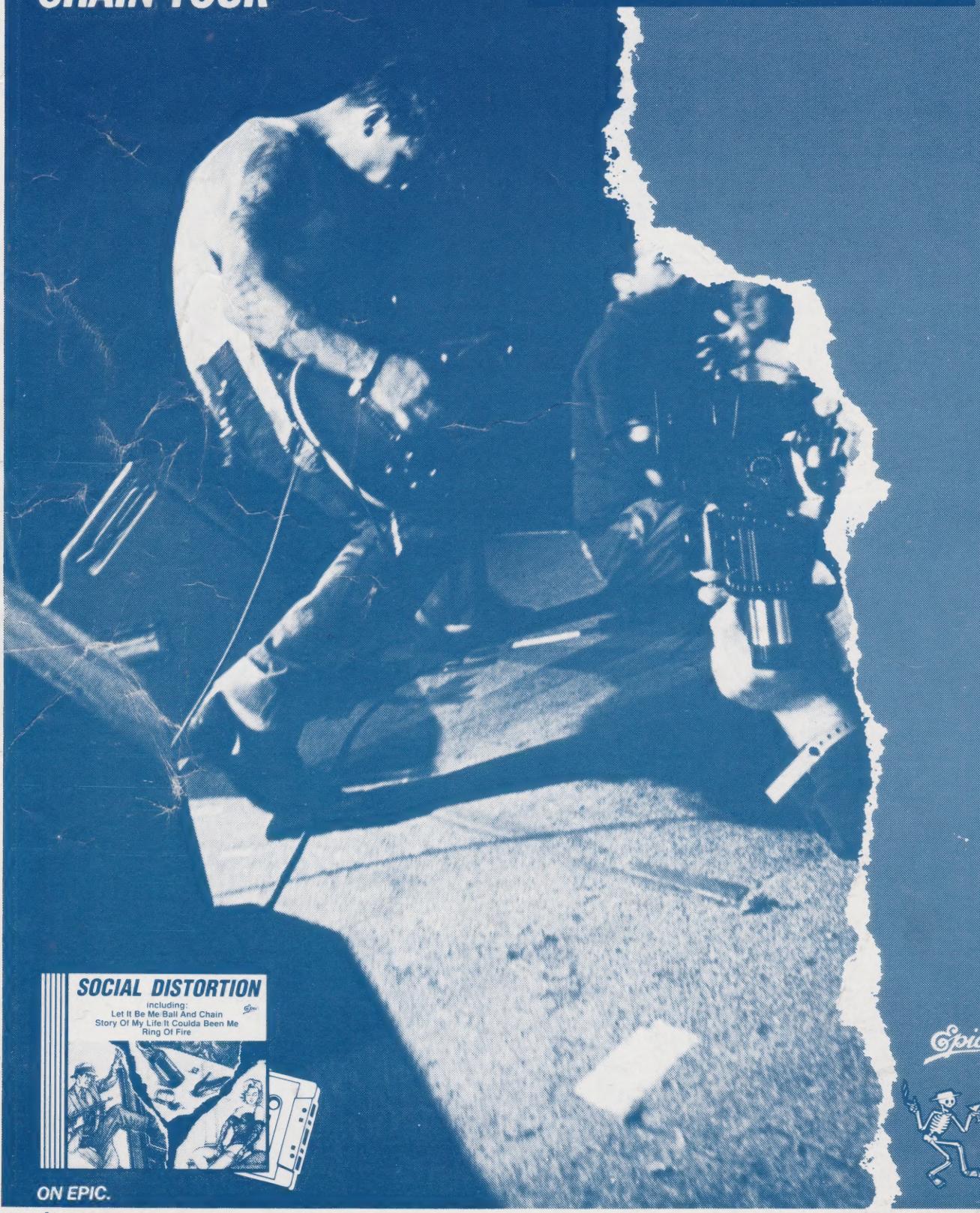
EDITORIALS: ROCK AGAINST
WOMEN, BAD SONGWRITING!

RECORDS: MORRISSEY, PALE
SAINTS, MEGA CITY 4, WIRE,
60's HOLLIES, STRANGLERS,
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D.O.A., DIDJITS, TEARDROP
EXPLODES, EMBARRASSMENT,
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AND 81 OTHERS!!!!!!

8 INTERVIEWS!: MARK BURGESS (CHAMELEONS/SUN & THE MOON) PART 3, DAMIEN O'NEILL (UNDERTONES/THAT PETROL EMOTION) PT. 2, BUZZCOCKS, IAN McCULLOCH, HOUSE OF LOVE, BAD RELIGION, SOCIAL DISTORTION, 80-83 T.S.O.L.

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THE ALBUM
THE BALL AND
CHAIN TOUR**

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RABID, SUBMERGED
UNDER 27 MAGS BY
HERB JUE. (N.Y.C.)
PARODY OF "THIS
CHARMING MAN" 45
CONCEPT BY JACK
RABID + HERB JUE)

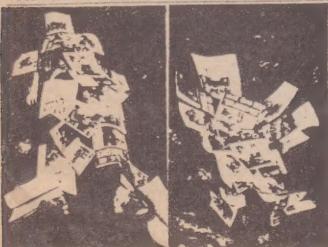


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C)1990 Rodent Productions (as yet not indicted in the H.U.D. scandal, but we're trying!). Consent for reproductions is easily obtained via simple request; reprinting without permission could mean somebody's going to get hurt (like Rev. Al Sharpton, I'm not advocating, just predicting. Yeah, sure.) It was 10 years ago today, that Sgt. Stein taught Rabid to play.....Big Takeover comes out every 6 months (too long for most people, too short for me, though for some it's the other way around), and has been arriving at your door every June and December more or less since the caveman invented the snare drum (OK, so it's actually May 1980, who cares about inconvenient facts anyway!). The Abbey-Normal brain-child of one of the most heinous mad scientists of our time, the evil doctor DAVID (Frank N.) STEIN, his intention was to "takeover" the world (what mad scientist ever settles for less?), and his method would be to poison the world's thought supply (easy since the reservoirs are rapidly depleting), by creating an innocent looking magazine that would camouflage his insidious subliminal messages. His background was his secret experiments in the lab after Chemistry class at Summit High School (though why he always chose a stunning, voluptuous cheerleader to help him, men of science can only speculate at), and a moment of inspiration from Get Smart's Groovy Guru.

For this crowning masterpiece, Dr. Stein enlisted as his assistant the mentally disturbed, hunchbacked JACK (Igor) RABID, the vinyl-eating do-do thought to be a throwback to the pre-Masterdon Crustacean-brain man. Rabid being sufficiently eager, Dr. Stein and his new-found partner took a sacred pen and placed it on the string of a kite they flew in a storm (bic generic ball point, 29¢ at Siegel's Stationary in Summit, for those of you future evil geniuses scoring at home). When the lightning

finally struck, the pen was energized, frothy smoke bellowed from the spout (and spurting ink, all over my new pants pocket), demons were automatically summoned, witches stirred giant cauldrons (my mom's soup) and cast a spell on a parchment, hobgoblins danced menacingly around it, and Vincent Price even stopped by to sign autographs. The parchment was instantly converted by these forces of darkness (mind you, this is 8 years before Fields of Nephilium) into a rough draft, later typed at the rate of 9 words a minute by Rabid.

This one-sided (in more ways than one), one page 8½ X 11 spiel was eventually christened "The Big Takeover" after consultations with fellow evil scientists H.R., Darryl, Dr. Know and Earl. Dr. Stein and Rabid waited for nightfall and then hurriedly drove Dad Rabid's Dodge Colt to the Summit Public Library where they placed 100 dimes into the copy machine, as legitimate scholars fumed impatiently in line behind them for 20 minutes. The 100 copies clutched under the armpit of the hideous hunchback Rabid, the pair dropped several in the mail, and deposited the rest at record stores and clubs in Manhattan, where they knew their virus would spread the quickest. As with all monsters, the citizens were terrified, the authorities were assembled, the army fled, the major record companies trembled (we can dream, can't we?), and Japanese film crews arrived to film it all.

But unbeknownst to a triumphant Dr. Stein, who was imagining himself replacing Bela Lugosi as Time Magazine's "Spook of The Year," the pitiful hunchback Rabid was also harboring schemes to take over the planet himself (though he'd settle for the music business), and he had clandestinely programmed their new monster to kill Dr. Stein, so Stein was forced to flee to Boston to evade certain extinction (and to attend college). Since then he's similarly fled to N.Y., back to Summit, to Madison N.J., back to N.Y., and elsewhere to evade his tormenting pursuer. He now resides in Phoenix, AZ where he has mended his ill ways (he dropped out of the music scene) in hope that he has put enough distance between himself and his evil past, though mindful of Trotsky's Icypick, he forever lives on edge, his doors locked, his blinds drawn. He reads nothing.

Dr. Stein safely out of the picture, Rabid stopped congratulating himself long enough to assemble issue 2 by himself, and it has been ever thus. 10 years later, Rabid has lost his hunch, and is cleverly disguised as a mild mannered, good looking (?) music reporter, trying to scam his way into shows for free like everyone else does, by overcoming otherwise forbidding doormen and publicists with his now far bigger, more imposing monster, converting all to his repellent doctrine.

So, for the 28th time, this mag is dedicated to the pursuit of better music and better culture; to document as well as possible the music that continues to exist as an alternative to that same old counterfeit and fraudulent rock that parades to our disgust on our airwaves, on our TV, in our clubs, and worst of all, in our magazines. From the thickheaded Bon Jovi and the bigoted Guns and Roses to brain-dead, sexist heavy metal, hyper-ego drone rap, party-boy waste-case frat rock, dreadful dulling disco, and flatulent feed-bag techno-pop, it often seems like nothing exists but diluted, unadulterated pap, sterile pablum by obnoxious dweebs, self-obsessed losers and pampered, pouting pop star airheads.

But there are choices, and there is rock 'n' roll and pop music being made that can assail the senses without insulting a 3rd grade education,

music with real heart and real soul that shows up these commercial frauds for the impostors they are, and that's what is worth supporting in these strange times. Besides this, music is an enriching agent, a moving art, a spice towards a more spiritually satisfied and inspired life. Our humble endeavors to document the works of genuinely great artists often unknown to the general public are merely to pass on the unbounded joy these people's music has given us in the expectation that a similar effect will be produced. And, once again, to encourage people not to forsake active participation in their culture, despite the current trends that cater to our loafing idleness; to forego video games, rented movies (though with today's movie ticket prices, it's understandable), and the whole passive "home entertainment" revolution in general, and get out there into the clubs, halls, theaters, art galleries, parks, parties, gatherings, and bars, wherever culture is taking place, and be a part of it in a more interactive existence.

The real goal is more significant conversations; of more human behavior; of substance over image; of encouragement and nurturing instead of juvenile, bloated put-downs; and of action over inertia. Most of all, ours is a search for more lasting art and perception, irrespective of the dominant fads and trends of a condescending super-market, a combination of thought, desire, talent and artistic ideas, of sacrifice and sweat for the sake of expression over applause. These pursuits come with built-in rewards; the discovery of more stimulating art/life leads to a domino effect of inspiration; "You only get out of something what you put into it" is a cliche with a lot of truth in it.....

THANKS MOST OF ALL TO Caroline Pari for her long hours transcribing the Mark Burgess interview, **AND SECONDLY** to Rich Katz, Mitch and Sandy Friedland, Larry Heinemann, Mike McMackin, Jeff and Joyce Kelson, Regina Joskow, Dave Burokas and family, Kevin Linehan, Mike Shea and Joe Banks, Eddie Marshall, Andrea Mulrain, John Fox, John Kezdy, Herb Jue, Steve Fallon, Bob Mould, Nick Hill, Steve Hendricks, Alan Fielding, Michael Ackerman, Louise (CBGB), Bruce Licher, Jeff Runnings, Judy Holmes and Ron, Elyse Press, David Fricke, Dave Frey, Tony Schinella, Lorna Muller, Greg Fasolino, Frank Riley, Rene Cuccuro, Alison Overton, Mike & Sheila Kurtz, Danny Kurtz & Jane, Dave Ruffy, Tim Broun, Ben + Debbie Szporluk, Anna and Sid Bensen, James Moreland, Naked Statue, Jon Welles, Christine Young, Hugh and Lee (WNYU), Greg Sahagian, Mike Conley, The Dawson family, Jen Broun, all Corradi, Griswold, Resca, Allen, Jerry Stellatella, and other such kin. **SPECIAL THANKS** to Mark Burgess, Damien O'Neill, Ian McCulloch, Guy Chadwick, Mike Ness, Pete Shelley & Steve Diggle, Mr. Brett & Greg Graffin, and Jack & Ron of the original T.S.O.L. for the interviews.

AND THANKS to Todd Abramson, Andy (So What), Ade (Red Letter Day), Michael Azzerad, Mark Bandola, Glen Boothe, Jeff Borchardt, David Best, Kristi Callan, Paul Dickman, Greg Dunlap, Tony Dillof, Bill Donahue, John Figler, Fred The Bastard, Mike Faccioli, Factsheet Five, Wayne Guskind, Jeff Gibson, Ted G. (See Hear), Steve Graham, Matt Green, James Graham, Mel Goldman, Barbara Gogan, John Haggerty, Kevin Hogan, Mark Harrison, Jeff Herrmann and Kathy, Pam Hawks, Cathy James, Tom & Dave Keener, Lara Khachooni, Amanda Kramer, Beth Kaplan, Chip Kinman, Chris Krakora, Doug Katz, Richard Lyons, Jeff Loh, Ron Ledonne, Mary Melia, Leticia Mulzac, Kristin Mullins, Stu Novick, Naked Raygun, Maria Pari, Julie Panebianco, Garth Ripton, Lisa Robinson and Deane Zimmerman, all at Rockpool, Steve Rea, Jerry Rubino,

Rob Ross, (crazy) Rick, Lydia Sherwood, Stephanie Shayne, Mike Saunders, Dave Segal, John Silva, Lydia Szkodzinsky, Brain and Shaun Sheridan, Carlos Soria, Social Distortion, Barry S. (Venus), John Stewart, Michael Tedesco, Terry Tolken, Ron Velloci & Mike, Darren Vickers, Vanguard Printers, Bruce Warren, Julie Wolfe, Mark Williams, Bobby Weeks, Jeff Wright, and Greg Wilson. **THIS ISSUE IS FOR DORIAN DAWSON, WHOSE BELIEF IN MY WORK (AND INSPIRATION FROM IT) AND ME NEVER FAILS TO AMAZE ME. AND THESE 10 YEARS ARE FOR THOSE WHO INSPIRED ME THE MOST TO GET GOING: MARTY BYK AND DANIEL MARTIN COONEY (WSOU, late 70's), TIM SOMMER, DAVE STEIN, JEFF HUTCHINSON, JANET WHITEHOUSE, NICK MARDEN, CLAUDE BESSY (KICKBOY FACE), SLASH, SEARCH AND DESTROY, TROUSER PRESS, CAROLINE COON, TV SMITH, MARK PERRY, JANE HANBURGER, RUTH POLSKI, JIM FOURATT, MAX'S KANSAS CITY, TR3, BAD BRAINS, STIMULATORS, THE MAD, HEARTBREAKERS, BUZZCOCKS, RUTS, WEIRDOS AND TOO MANY OTHER BANDS TO NAME, AND MOST OF ALL TO SUMISHA BRAHM AND CAROLINE PARI, WHO HAVE ALWAYS BACKED ME UP WHEN I'VE NEEDED INSPIRATION CLOSER TO HOME 1980-1990.**

STAFF: JACK RABID: Publisher/Editor/Typist/all writing and photos except where credited, all layout except front cover, accountant, proofreader and spell checker, mail answerer (postal increase?!) Quick, someone hand me a gun), fact checker (if I feel like it), still former Yankee fan (I've speculated that the team was being run by Daffy Duck & Moe Larry and Curly. After the Winfield trade, I'm afraid I may have slandered Daffy Duck & Moe Larry and Curly), typically disappointed Ranger fan (50 years since a Stanley Cup and they still couldn't check a pillow), college assistant (don't ask me, ask your professor), self-styled aristocrat (if you count a rented apartment that looks like the bomb dropped), ace golfer (I broke 100 this

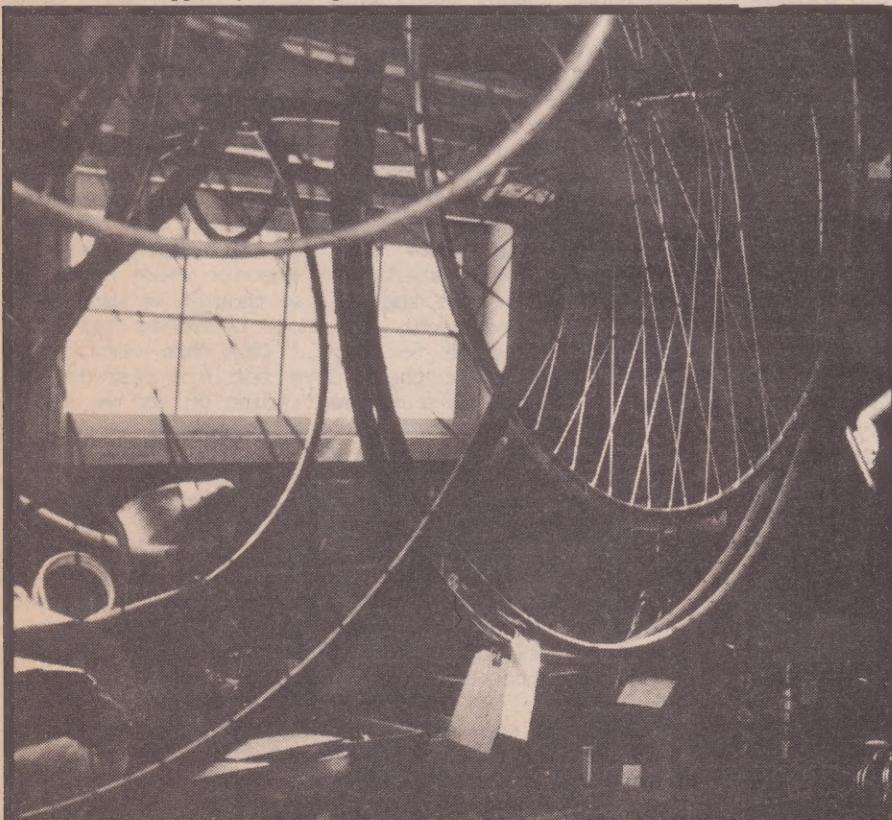
year! Jack Nicklaus move over!), still fearless traveler (spanning the globe to bring you the thrill of rock 'n' roll, and the agony of airplane food), sputtering drummer (what's time, anyway?), & more cheerful chump than in past, ain't life grand? **C**

CAROLINE PARIS: Mark Burgess interview transcriber (Frankly, less has been written about World War II, Jack), no longer spelling checker & proofreader (good, your spelling was putting me off my food anyway!), professor by day/student by night (am I teaching or taking this class? I forgot!), Philadelphia expert (enough sightseeing, let's have lunch), & founder of Jackson Heights cat depository (bring us your tired, neurotic, lazy, and stupid, as long as they're cute.....oh!)

RICH KATZ: Odds and ends, check forger (see you at Sing Sing), a man who shed no tears for the Knicks (and drank the well dry when they wasted the Celtics, ha ha!), future wine-taster of America (more suitable than job he has now), roommate apparition (wait! I see signs he's been here! This half empty coffee cup wasn't here when I went to bed! Call Stephen Spielberg, quick!), fashion maverick (nothing in this store I want, either), one of the last people with a brain in America!

SUMISHA BRAHM: Cover Big Takeover graphic, layout and execution of front cover (a first), London hobo (when you hear the beep, my new address will be....), still the most welcoming host in creation (come visit or I'll kidnap you), a renaissance woman whose immense talent continues to run ahead of her recognition (labels take note!) **WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM: TIM BROUN, ED MARSHALL, TIM SOMMER, JODI SHAPIRO, JOHN STEWART, JEFF KELSON!**

HONORARY STAFF MEMBERS: REGINA JOSOW, RENE CUCCURO AND ANDREA MULRAIN, WITHOUT WHOM...



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OPENING STATEMENT: 10 YEARS OF BIG TAKEOVER

I have much philosophy on my mind; please bear with me on this unusual occasion, and grant me this space to be so "pedantic" (as Bad Religion say).

It's a PROUD day in my house. The greatest reward for hard work is never money (though most of us accept it as a means to survival and more), but a sense of accomplishment and involvement. When we are not worried about our survival, we exist in a lonely world full of mundane routine, senseless activities, worthless charade, vanity, anxieties, and above all, the ever conflicting drives for security and novelty. Family/friends/lovers are only part of the answer. To dispel these depressions, dissatisfactions, and duress, we need participation that inspires us, brings us closer to our fellow men and women; we need an answer to that old Minor Threat question: "At least I'm trying; What the fuck have you done?"

All of us like to sit around and complain that we don't like the way things are. We point our long bony fingers in our blame and accountability oriented society, forming scapegoats, and enslaving ourselves to generalizations and over-simplifications of complex issues. Somewhere deep within we feel a gnawing sense that we can't wave a magic wand and our problems will vanish, yet in a service economy we still want everything done for us, instead of doing it ourselves. My otherwise proud mother warns my girlfriends (only half jokingly) not to let me get away with the stunts I pulled on her ("What do you think, you have a maid?").

PRIDE may goeth before a fall, but that's ego, conceit, and narcissism, which we all struggle to keep in check. The other side of pride is when one stops waiting for someone else to do something, when one stands up to his/her own inherent laziness and does something genuine that we all can benefit from. Stated in D.O.A. terms, Talk - Action = 0, and though they never solved for the equation Talk + Action = ?, let us say in terms of self-respect and achievement, it's infinity. Even if one's efforts go unappreciated, or are even derided or hated, this is something heartfelt to fall back on in trying times (that and a good book or movie, I suppose).

Why PRIDE? No matter what we do to combat it, we are always aware that we are all alone in our own universes, the only inhabitants of our personal bodies, and we can't help feeling a little forlorn at times. But we do things to bring us a little closer to others, naturally, and that has been my modest attempt in these pages for 10 years. The Big T. is not an extraordinary publication. It is not brilliantly written, it is not tightly edited, its contents appeal to but a minority. It has no staff to speak of, no financial backing, few ads and not even 10,000 printed (not exactly challenging Time or even Weekly World News). But then again it was never intended to be any of these things. Its goal was merely self-sufficiency, a reachout example of sorts. Pride is essentially self-belief; action is merely putting that belief into practice.

Music is an acknowledged passion of mine, so my efforts have concerned my beliefs in its power. I've always felt that if even so much as one person tried to express the attitude that good music is not our birthright, and that in an age where the best music is made by the least successful, our support and encouragement is imperative, that others would naturally be stirred to do the same; That my doing something would be a beacon for others!

Oh, but that's easy to expound with a smirk of self-satisfaction in a 10th anniversary issue! What have I really achieved? For what is my worthless publication compared to even one day of

my dear friend Mitch Friedland's job, where as a paramedic, he often saves the lives of the critically injured? That is real accomplishment, one that inspires few letters to the medic, and more blaming news articles (when despite his best efforts death wins out) than praising fanzine raves! What is music in comparison but mere entertainment, a distraction, a spare time enjoyment?

These questions I've no answer for, and I doubt there is one. But the small pride I feel in having reached this 10th year is not that I've accomplished something important (though some might find it so), good (though I always hope so), of use (though that's it's main intent), or even valid (for it's only one man's taste and opinion, regardless of how informed it may or may not be). These are tangibles in the eye of each individual reader, as you wile your own free time away reading this.

No, all such preening aside, the joy and pride for me is all in the self, from knowing the unlikely nature of this happenstance. I still remember the innocent way this thing started, lampooned at the start of each of the issues. There was no great plan, no desire to create a magazine, no ambition really at all, and it wasn't even my idea. Dave Stein and I were having a thrilling time at New York punk rock gigs in the late 70's, and in particular got to know a lot of people since the same folks turned up at all the punk gigs. For high school kids it was a sense of community and mutual affection we'd never known in suburbia, a complete opposite of the watchful conforming rituals, spiteful competition, adolescent ignorance and self-loathing we'd been used to. The music was damned exciting, and here was cultural involvement to really appreciate, anticipate, and get excited about! Meet some girls, hear a band, exchange ideas, get turned on to things we'd never heard before (having ALAN GINSBERG for a landlord briefly as a 17 year old I'll never forget!), it was a great positive force for us. When I sit and type these days, I often think that even if the music scene is 1/100th of what it used to be, and it is, the potential is always there for people getting involved for the first time to derive the same sudden fulfillment where before there was none!

So, we started a newsletter in May of 1980, three or four years into our club-going times. I phoned up Dave yesterday in Phoenix where he lives, and asked him what the hell we thought we were doing back then (and again, the whole thing was his idea, he just asked me to help). Dave has very little to do with music these days but his response was quick: "There was a movement going on and we sensed it, we were part of it, and we wanted to express it." So the mag was conceived in that spirit. It focused on The Stimulators, since they were then the most popular local punk band, their gigs were like parties where all the local punks turned out; we merely wanted to let people know when the gigs would be and what was happening, such useful information. One single sided page was sufficient. We made 100 copies (yes it was at Summit N.J. public library, one dime at a time, oh how naive), gave 'em out, thought little about it. When Dave left for college, I decided to do it without him from my own college, and by the third issue the mag was set up to pass along news about all punk and post-punk gigs and happenings. And it's been that way ever since.

The mag was free the first dozen issues. I still think info should be free, but that's not financially possible. Issues 2-7 were one legal size page folded over so it would be 4 small pages. Issue 8 was the first 8 1/2 x 11. In '82-'83 I grew disenchanted with a punk scene I thought to

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TEN ROIR YEARS Commemorating ROIR's 10th Anniversary, Ira Robbins, editor of the new *Trouser Press Record Guide*, has compiled an anthology of "unbridled stylistic diversity." Buzzcocks, Television, Glenn Branca, MC5, Dictators, Dickies, Nico, Durutti Column, Fleshtones, UK Subs, Bad Brains, Joe "King" Carrasco, Mekons, Three Johns, ? And The Mysterians, Brother Vernard Johnson, GG Allin, Germs, Flipper, Prince Charles. Over 80 minutes long!

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be a shell of its former self (though much of the music was still great), seeing none of the cultural and intellectual possibilities it once offered so readily. In fact, it represented the junior high school mentality I thought I'd left behind! I decided to shift the coverage more to the college radio/post-modern or alternative new music (whatever you call it) sound; this I felt mandatory since the two local mags which had covered this stuff, *New York Rocker* and *Trouser Press*, had both folded, leaving a gaping void in information that has never truly been filled round here. *Big Takeover* can't fill it either, and has never tried. But, at least it's been a way to keep up with some of the activities of some of these bands. Information is the strongest tool!!!!!!

A few issues ago, I also added some 50's and 60's people I grew up with, but for the most part, the heart of the coverage has remained unchanged since 1983. A friend of mine asked me yesterday if I ever thought I'd make it 10 years, and I replied truthfully, "No, I've just never felt the need to stop doing it!" Which leads me to the next point.

Why has *Big T.* continued to grow, then, if not ambition? A small part of it is the desire to improve, to make each issue better than the last. To do so, many improvements have required more space, in particularly the introduction of interviews in issue 23, starting with 1 in that one, now up to 8. The letters section came in a few years ago, and keeps getting larger as more people sensibly comment. Some other people are now contributing reviews, the reviews have gotten longer, and there's been more pictures. Most of it though, springs from desperation; It is harder now to do the things I want to do, as set forth in the beginning of this

piece. How do I reach like minds, to spread my example of self-sufficient involvement, productivity and love of music? 10 years ago, one page did the job adequately, for to reach people of the same temperament and taste, I had merely to go to a gig. Now, there is no scene, no movement to belong to, no underground uprising to feel a part of, no community, no support group, no affinity for a larger ideal, no cultural happening beyond a single gig or record to involve us. The belief in music doesn't seem to tie us together so snugly as it once did, as a supreme excuse to get to know each other, to overlook our differences and dwell on what we like about each other. When such acceptance, selflessness and spirit flourishes, the human kind feels refreshed; when we are all but a bunch of suspicious strangers peering at each other from behind our security fences we erect, we are not reassured.

So, the mag grows to attract more and more diverse people, a poor substitute but better than nothing, for the sort who feels like myself about music and this potential to get people together. Just like seeing a movie in a packed theater is a 1000 times better than watching it alone on your VCR, the social possibilities of music is what we so badly neglect these days, and what most of us need the most! This desire to spread my emotion about music in the hope of getting together with people who share this feeling with me is the single agent that has not only kept the mag in existence but caused it to grow. The less this exists, the more I try to attract it.

So far it seems to be working, as more people have responded of late than ever before; I can only surmise that there are as many disaffected out there as before; that the resistance to commercial pabulum



classic rock is as strong as ever, and that rather than being an indication of the demise of the resistance, the charting of a few alternative groups, and the current major label raid on independent talent is proof that the distaste for lame 70's rock grows at a steady rate! But, despite this growth, the means to reach out easily to this growing number of disaffected has actually decreased; my correspondence is filled with people who are just glad to meet someone who shares their ideals about music beyond the marketplace as it's stood for 20 dire years since the Beatles/Stones and company ruled the charts. These letters inspire me in those onerous times I referred to earlier

Here's one I got this week, from one of my longest subscribers, Kurt Brenneman of Greensboro, NC, that sums up better than I can what these 10 years and 28 issues of unending labor have been for. He says, "Each issue of the mag is a plunge into your sensibility, and your enthusiasm is contagious, for music, art, life, in general. I'm not into the music scene as I was 5-7 years ago. But your mag takes me back to those days, and reminds me of how much there is to choose from culturally, and to never stop exploring. That is appreciated."

When I get letters like this, I swell with PRIDE, the pride of sincerity as opposed to ego, of being understood and enjoyed. But I also swell with the thought that maybe I am doing something that is making a difference in other people's lives; at least the effort is always there. Maybe music is only entertainment, is only diversion. But, attitude and vivacity are what we look for in life, and it is truly my goal to inspire, as others have always inspired me, to give what I have gotten (obviously, much of this attempts to pay back the bands and musicians for the extraordinary music they have given me, and us, by trying to help spread the word!), to be a contributing member, and to keep doing something to be proud of, as admirable people do, which brings me some measure of joy. It's our consciousness that searches for meaning in an existence which offers none but what you make. Music is just a reflection of that, and Big T. is just a reflection of me and what I want out of life. If it has touched you in a way to be more ardent and fervent, to want to be a part of something good as opposed to just waiting for it to come to you, to reach out to your friends to join you in this, to distribute the knowledge, ideas, and discoveries with your friends (music or otherwise) and to love more deeply that which you love, than all the toil of these past years have been more than worth it. I derive the most immense satisfaction known to man at the thought of that possibility being true, for this past decade and the one to come.

It was an unlikely idea to have persisted 10 years, and really only you can tell if was worth it to you, or whether the whole thing was a colossal, quixotic waste of valuable time. But to me, it represents a documented record of my constant effort, that to answer Minor Threat, I have been consistently trying, at least. This does much for my contentment with life. I can live with myself more easily to know this deep inside when those human doubts about life's everpresent solitude and melancholy try to creep in and sorrow my soul.

On this day, I am very PROUD and not ashamed of it. Here's an innocent hope that I've earned that in your thoughts and in your convictions.

OPENING STATEMENT 2: If you like what you read in this magazine, here's some other places you'll encounter the editor's work:

- 1) Alternative Press Magazine (a monthly magazine, I write a large news/info column for them each month. A much better mag than Spin for articles, interviews and up to date info. (1451 W. 112th, Cleveland OH, 44102)
- 2) Rockpool Magazine (a twice a month industry tipsheet/trade publication, lists all releases and charts College Radio/Retail/Club DJ playlists, like Billboard for "Alternative" Music. Mostly for those who put out, spin, sell or otherwise market the music. I've done a talent scout "Up and coming, overlooked and/or underappreciated" column for them every two weeks for 5 years: (83 Leonard St., 2nd Floor, NY, NY 10013)
- 3) Music View (a weekly syndicated radio show for college and adventurous commercial radio stations, made up of interviews, music, flashback, and brief commentary) It's heard on over 200 stations across the country, a half hour each week. I play one song a week, generally an old rarity of some current interest, or some new overlooked release that's really great and deserves more attention, I enjoy the opportunity immensely each week, for four years now. (Joseph Fox Communications, 67-73 Spring St., NY, NY 10012)
- 4) Springhouse In which I try to put up or shut up. It's easy to criticize from a distance what you yourself can't do. We believe that those who like this mag would like our music too, we certainly attempt to hold it to the same standard that we judge the bands contained herein, though of course, that's for you to judge and for me to hope we succeed at. We sure like it, two years worth now. I'm drums, Mitch Friedland guitar and most of the vocals, Larry Heinemann is bass. (same address as the mag)
- 5) Reflex Magazine has started up again under new management, and I contribute one or two reviews and an occasional feature. (120 E. 32nd St., Suite 407, NYC 10016)

EDITORIALS

EDITORIAL #1: THE RETRO 80'S/DEATH OF SONGWRITING

For this writer, 1989 was another strong year for music, in the sense that I continued to purchase music that I couldn't stop playing, and saw many shows that moved me. But it sagged noticeably compared to previous years, a sad wimper to a dying decade. 'Cause most of the music that kept me happy this year was recorded or played live by artists who I've admired for years, some of which didn't even exist for most of the decade.

1989 was characterized by reunions and other nostalgic shows. Much of the critical debate I heard and read argued the merits of these comebacks or continued activities of artists decidedly from another era. In particular, in England, the weeklies had a field day grousing over the Stone Roses sudden emergence as the hottest phenomena since the Smiths (with a sound that largely recalled the 60's), and in particular, their lyric "Kiss Me Where the Sun Don't Shine/The Past Was Yours but the Future's Mine/You're all Out of Time" from their top 40 UK hit "She Bangs The Drums."

My stance is simple, and was laid out last issue. If bands I like want to make comebacks, then I'll be there to check 'em out. Why not judge each individual band by the merits? Some comebacks are a bogus disgrace to former greatness, a slick exploitation by promoter and artist to dupe the unsuspecting public out of their cash. Most however,

turned out to be pretty joyful, funny, or just plain nostalgic (is it a sin?), which made the ticket buy warranted. The Buzzcocks in particular were the most exciting band I saw live in 1989, and they hadn't played a show in 8 1/2 years.

But all this squabbling missed the real point. Promoters work on demand. If there's no demand, there's no show. Jefferson Airplane, The Who, Stones, Buzzcocks, Crime, Stiff Little Fingers, '76 Damned, The Crowd, & The Weirdos all came back, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Beach Boys, Chuck Berry with Uptown Horns, and to a lesser extent, Bo Diddley in the park were all great. McCartney, Ringo, Dylan, etc. hit the road, the past was present for all music fans. Only ostriches, cynics and the style police refused to take part in the 50's, 60's and 70's that passed for 1989. Why was the demand so sharp? 'Cause modern, new (i.e., first LP in the last 3 years) bands just don't know how to write songs anymore.

Most of today's indie bands wouldn't know a well written, catchy song if one shot them in the balls they think they have so much of. Following Sonic Youth (a great band aurally, but not exactly classic songwriters), most of the indie scene can't, or more likely won't write songs that are worth singing along to. Their indie offspring are far worse, far more annoying, celebrating noise, volume, distortion, offensiveness (much like the fanzines that support them) and just making a godawful racket as great music. Sometimes it is, with powerful results, a kick in the ass (from Big Black to the early Nihilistics), because the riffs are there hiding in the background, and thus the chaos is liberating rather than just noise for noise's sake. Mostly, it's merely irritating, a headache producing blitz non unlike the Con Ed man ripping up the street with his jackhammer after the latest water pipe rupture.

9 Taking their cue from the hardcore market which went metal, most of today's indie market sounds like 70's retro rock at it's worst, lame guitar bands that think they're bad ass, when they sound like warmed over Nugent without a riff in sight. Sadly, as if it weren't bad enough that these people plague the alternative record stores and magazines, now they're all getting signed! This is our major label "alternative"?

The majors, having almost completely rid the indies of the few truly remarkable (or just plain good) bands they'd produced in the last few years, have gone crazy, signing acts that have no business being on a major before they've finished growing or building some minor following, or worse, whatever slick, diluted, pap and neo-metal they can pass off as cutting edge. Their motive is to find the next XTC, Cure, REM, Pixies, Sugarcubes, U2, Banshees, Love and Rockets, etc., but they're not going to find them amongst the mediocre likes of Poi Dog Pondering, Soundgarden (Led Zep wannabes for sure, why are they on 120 Minutes when they belong on the headbangers hour?), Toad the Wet Sprocket, Jane's Addiction, Caterwaul, Prong, Hangmen, or even the OK but badly derivative Ocean Blue.

While mainstream rock has improved thanks to the invasion of the above mentioned new "postmodern" stars, the more middle of the road sound still dominates, and this is even more 70's retro. Whether it's Warrant or Skid Row, today's bands have sunk to even further depths of mimicking bad 70's metal worse than we thought possible. With Sebastian of Skid Row and Jon Bon Jovi getting arrested within a week of each other in January for their stupid behavior (Bon Jovi for saying the L.A. Rams were a bunch of "fags" in Ireland where it's illegal to use such slurs in public, the other for hitting a female audience member with a thrown bottle after



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he himself was hit), is it too much to hope for that they'll just rot in jail and leave us in peace?

No one can convince me that even OK acts like Mudhoney, Ball, Revolting Cocks, Butthole Surfers, Laughing Hyenas, or Spaceman Three have written a single song worth hearing again a decade from now. That's not what those band's are all about, their niche is the shock of the new, and there's definitely room for what they do, yet their predominance in the indie scene (and now up into the majors) has fostered a revulsion in the underground (elitist, separatist collectors in particular) for more traditional riffing rock bands and creative bands bereft of radical posturing, shock tactics, elaborate multi-media live presentation, or otherwise tough guy image. That which is more sensitive, ethereal, subtle, involved, complex, beautiful, layered, brooding, or just well constructed rock 'n' roll with some background in pop tradition is somehow not de rigueur enough. The interest dwindles, the market lessens. Thus, the indies shy away from bands that don't sound like Aerosmith put through a meat grinder or some bogus hardcore metal.

Even some of the more interesting bands that have gotten popular are nothing spectacular, and are often pale imitations of something from the past. I agree with Fred Mills who wrote recently that people settle for less these days. I don't remember which examples he cited, but it went something like: Galaxie 500 instead of Velvet Underground, Ocean Blue instead of Echo and The Bunnymen, Red Hot Chili Peppers instead of Funkadelic, on and on and on.

1989 was a pathetic year for discovering new bands. Absolutely the worst since 1975, and the last few years were bad enough! Artists and particularly fans are too damn scared to embrace anything innovative, creative, fresh or new, even if only a new look at a past idea with the mind to the future. And they're frightened out of their wits at a decent melody, of a soaring hook, or a vocal line that doesn't whine at you like a baby in the throes of a tantrum. Styles come and styles go, fads change, scenes of varying musics emerge, but one thing rings true in all the hottest or loveliest music, and that's the pure thrill of a great song married to a sympathetic (i.e., not dull) sound, and today's songwriting is shit shit shit, and today's sound is old old old.

It is these twin dearths that has opened the door for the oldtimers to give us another hurrah. 'Cause when there's nothing of our own era worth listening to or trekking out to see, the choice is to give up music or go back to other eras and play those older records on the shelf. When there's no new bands we wish to see we're more likely to fork over the cash for a bygone favorite. Since music is in our blood we do the latter, and I wouldn't trade 2000 shows by Happy Flowers or Hothouse Flowers or whatever dead flowers are stinking up the air today for even 5 minutes of The Buzzcocks at the Ritz. And frankly, The Who doing Tommy at Radio City (without Billy Idol and Elton John, please!) beats the fuck out of anything Guns and Roses, Erasure, Vomit Launch, or the once great Simple Minds have done the last 6 years. At least Pete Townsend knew a good song when he heard one (then, not now!).

New music is only being kept alive by those who predate 1983, and a select handful of others who still largely rely on pre-'83 music as their main inspiration, like the 60's heavy sounds of La's and Stone Roses, or the 70's punk pop ethic of Mega City Four and company, but this list diminishes with the inevitable demise of musicians

as they get older and opt for other outlets for their expression. The fact is, if so many people hadn't come back, if so much old incredible music hadn't suddenly re-emerged in print (if only because of the CD boom and the British's penchant for old U.S roots music that US labels are too stupid to share), there would have been 1/2 as much to see and listen to that was worth the effort!

Where are The Sex Pistols, Beatles or Big Joe Turners of the 80's? There weren't any! At this rate, there won't be any in the 90's to provide a spark. No one's listening anymore.

The emperor never had the clothes his predecessor wore so fabulously. Music isn't dead, but the new music scene is. Rip it up and start again.

It's up to us to demand better material from the music we support, and to hunt out people that have come up with a distinctive sound and style to match the songs and attitude. They're out there somewhere, and we should be looking for them, supporting them, and giving them the idea that someone's paying attention, that not everyone falls for just a bunch of hot air and male bonding. From the hardcore scene to the rampant noise scene, to even much of the garage rock scene, this is punk's liberation and ideal badly used.

There is more to rock 'n' roll than pissing off your neighbor and trying to be the most radical. The goal first and foremost should be to make enduring music, the kind that flourishes in all different generations of different people, as all these reunions are a testament to.

As this writer remarked recently in a letter to Flipside, it is no shame to still like some old band that's largely rested on their laurels for over a decade (in that case, The Dickies), at least they have some laurels to rest on. Anything they do after that is a plus. Where are tomorrow's laurel resters today? Will anyone release a Rancid Vat complete box set in 2004? Will they? Somehow we still doubt it.

EDITORIAL #2: DISREGARD THAT LAST EDITORIAL!

Well, no, not really. It still holds for the industry in general. There's so much great attitude and freshly defiant noise, yet so little songwriting left in the U.S. indies, it still seems like writing a catchy tune has become a dirty word akin to one African-American calling another an "Uncle Tom" or a sell out. And until recently even most of the UK bands seemed like good yet insufficient replacements for the giants that we've lost over the last few years, both popular (the Mac-led Bunnymen, Smiths, Damned), and the lesser knowns (Chameleons, Sun and The Moon, Sound, Lucy Show, Neurotics, etc.). But that last editorial represents the pessimistic outlook. For this part two, let's try to look at the more optimistic side: Maybe the 90's won't be so bad after all. There is a crop of new bands the world over, to whom the art of a good melody and a great (memorable) backing for it is not lost. Just off the top of the head, here's some groups that have emerged unheralded or otherwise over the last few years that don't seem to have their heads up their backsides where it comes to giving us something to sing along to or at least hum to. All are worth following, and that's what fandom is all about! Black Watch, Blases, Chopper, Clay Idols, Datura Seeds, Didjits, Drumming on Glass, Family Cat, For Against, Happy Hate Me Nots, House of Love, Kitchens of Distinction, La's, Lush, Mega City 4, Mock Turtles, Moffs, Pale Saints, Prudes, Red Letter Day, Ride, Scrawl, Senseless Things, Servants, Shams, Springfields, Stone Roses, Straight Jacket Fits, Sugarcubes, Wonder Stuff, etc, there are plenty more, that's just the top of the head.

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More to the point, the recent damn great to highly enjoyable albums by House of Love, Bad Religion, Pale Saints, Straight Jacket Fits, Stranglers, Social Distortion, Scrawl, Adrian Borland, Cure, Chills, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, Senseless Things, and others, all received in the last 6 months, have renewed the faith that great albums are still being made after all, independent of the noise merchants blistering our ear drums all over the place, with little to latch on to. There's even a Leaving Trains LP in the can at SST and Stone Roses LP to look forward to. Yes, most of them are foreign, but lately it seems like the freeze is over, and the usual free interchange between our countries has begun again in earnest. As I write the following foreign acts are listed as playing here in the next two months: Chills, House of Love, Inspiral Carpets, That Petrol Emotion, Loop, Wedding Present, Fall, all of which sound interesting. Bring on the new decade after all!

TIM SOMMER'S VIEWS: WHY ROCK IS ANTI-HUMAN; THE ASSAULT ON WOMEN or HATE ROCK AND THE MEN WHO RUN MUSIC

(Since Kickboy Face (Claude Bessy) of Slash quit writing a decade ago, Tim Sommer has been the best music journalist in America. Unfortunately, Tim tried to hang up his own pen a few years ago, and we're proud to say that's something we just won't allow. We would prefer not to have an exclusive on his talents, not counting his work for MTV News, but it's better than nothing! If you're not familiar with him, Tim used to write the "America Underground" column for Trouser Press, & the "N.Y. Noos" column for Sounds, and he hosted "Noise The Show,"

"Total Noise The Show" and "Music View" for WNYU. He's contributed to several mags, among them Musician, NY Rocker, NY Daily News, Heavy Metal and The Virgin Rock Yearbook. This is Tim's most controversial column to date, hope it inspires thought!)

Okay; so rock is full of hate today, and righteous articles reacting to it. And bigoted rock deserves some response, because it probably is a little bit harmful. When people we admire express hateful thoughts, I don't think we're more likely to embrace those thoughts, but we may be less likely to reject them; if a kid thinks that Axl has a negative enough opinion of homosexuals to go out of his way to mention it in a song, then perhaps some of those kids -- though I reckon it's a thin minority -- may not be inclined to begin the process of reasoning to determine otherwise.

So, that's my first point. Dice, Griff, Axl, etc., I could do without their hate mongering -- though I don't think any of these hatemongerers incite anyone to hate who is not already disposed to hate. A parent can raise a kid to reject ignorance and bigotry, and to weigh the evidence prevalent in his own environment and do so; Dice/Griff etc. don't invent hatred, they merely consciously fail to inspire the less enlightened members of their audience to reject it. Mind you, it's easy for us to lecture about these particular windbags, talented and untalented (and I think Axl may be the best American rock singer/persona of his generation), but culturally, they appeal largely to those who are neither intellectuals nor over-educated, and it's just too fucking easy for us to raise our precious little white Jewish Echo and the Bunnymen loving noses at these people who we consider less couth than ourselves; so before I proceed, digressions aplenty, lemme clearly state that I consider white college



faves like Red Hot Chilli Peppers, Steve Albini, Butthole Surfers, etc., equally noxious and potentially harmful, though thankfully not as popular.

So we point our precious little lilly white fingers at this problem, and pat ourselves on the back for our social concern, our ability as consumers to embrace Michelle Shocked and reject Axl Rose (and I personally find Shocked far more offensive than Axl -- largely because as an artist she's bad and phony, and Axl is neither of those things), and we think that's that, and we're all hyped up now, because right-thinking well-educated white people such as ourselves, who scour record stores looking for Phil Ochs C.D.'s, are supposed to be all outraged, because rock today is anti-semitic, homophobic, rascist, misogynist, etc. But...

Rock music, good, bad, and indifferent, is frequently made by people who come from a very different background than myself, and have a very different life experience; I do not claim to understand that experience, and will not pass judgement on these people who are honestly (and, frequently, quite articulately) relating a part of their own life experience that I do not share. This especially applies to Public Enemy and Axl. I don't know what's it's like to grow up black; I have no fucking idea what it's like to live a life where your color marks you for persecution by police, employers, waiters, taxi drivers, car rental agencies, etc. -- in short, all elements of white society. Public Enemy are both articulate and of enormous musical importance, and I suppose their music is driven by this experience, this constant, never ending discrimination. And if they occasionally equate white power with Jews, I can't get too angry at that -- I often do that myself, and I'm jewish. I do think Jews, and their often peculiar interests, involving a frequent inability to see beyond their own cultural and class sphere, have a disproportionately large effect on the entertainment industry, and little has proved this more than the outrage over Public Enemy. How the fuck can a white jewish record company exec or rock critic pass judgement on music/lyrics that honestly and directly express the experiences of a culture they know nothing about? For the most part, the people who pass judgement on P.E. have nothing in their own experience that allows them to even begin to empathize with that experience. Mind you, I do think Professor Griff is a foolish and mis-informed dickhead, but he should be judged by his peers, and left to hang himself with his own foolish words. I think P.E.'s audience can discern between bullshit and wisdom; I know Chuck D. and Flav can. And they've chosen to reject Griff. But a white record company exec or critic, who knows nothing of the life experience that can mold and encourage such an aggressive and hateful stance, has no right to pass judgement on it. So let Griff hang himself, and trust that his audience knows better than to trust his words. If I had grown up in Griff's world, who's to say my sentiments would be any different from his? But I didn't grow up in Griff's world. So let 'em be heard.

Now, as for Axl...

Nearly everyone, coming to a strange town, climbs off a bus and is frightened, intimidated, or angered by things that they don't understand. You grow up in a small town, or you're just plain sheltered; you come to the big city. Immediately, you're confronted by a

sense of helplessness, isolation, and alienation in the face of rude shopkeepers, aggressive and criminally threatening strangers who may happen not be white, and homosexuals who are a lot more overt than the ones back home. A million young men have been frightened by these things -- Axl just chose to write a song honesty expressing this feeling. Am I gonna condemn this guy just because he expresses an emotion that millions of other young men -- some stupid, most just frightened or ignorant -- have felt, and will feel? Hell, no. I'd personally rather Axl hadn't used those words, but most likely they're the exact words that many kids in that position would use, and I personally have never climbed off that bus from a small town, with nothing but my ego to protect my, and my naivete and ignorance to betray me; I suppose Axl has expressed that particular emotion well, though perhaps too aggressively.

Finally, and most importantly, rock has always been anti-human. No group has been more consistently, thoroughly, and aggressively abused by rock music than women. And the cry to stop this crime is far less prevalent or adamant than the recent uproar to stop Axl or P.E. Simply put, men run the music industry; and not only do they perceive this crime as business as usual, but they also equate it with sales, and they could give a fuck how much harm it does to women. If these men are white, and they perceive music as anti-white, they protest; if they're jewish, and they perceive the music as being anti-semitic, they protest; if they're gay, and they perceive the music as anti-gay, they protest; if they're effete and intellectual, and the music expresses an opinion of a less effete majority, they protest; but if it shits on women, they just shut up. The damage done to women by one single MTV video by some nearly anonymous forgotten-tomorrow band is far more significant than the damage done to jews by every stupid statement ever ranted by Professor Griff put together and multiplied by ten. But the men who run the music industry do not give a fuck. Rock music has perpetrated a legacy of women as inferior objects who exist only for sex, and juvenile-looking girls as the ideal object of sexual desire. According to rock history, men play rock to get young girls, and girls listen to rock in order to lust for these men. That's what this experience has been reduced to, whether you're Robert Plant or the Red Hot Chilli Peppers. There's nothing wrong with lust -- it may be the central factor in all good rock'n'roll; but there is something wrong with treating half the human race solely as idiot consumers or idiot sex objects. To paraphrase Spinal Tap, it's the ol' fine line between sexy and sexist; Marc Bolan's childish and charming odes to women were sexy; Aerosmith's equally charming odes to their own dick and the need for every teenage girl to worship it are sexist, stupid, demeaning, and harmful. Aerosmith, or Robert Plant, are over 40, talented, and relatively smart; they should know better. But all a woman is ever going to be in their songs is a teenage girl lusting after their aged johnson. That's it. That's life to them. And rock music and rock videos is basically all the culture that a lot of people get, so I must believe that the constant portrayal of a young girl as the sexual ideal must have some residual negative effect; and, needless to say, the constant demeaning role women are told they serve in rock culture (and, as stated, rock is culture to much of America) can't necessarily be left behind when MTV gets turned off. I don't know exactly where to draw the line here; I am fiercely anti censorship, so I wouldn't

advocate anything like that -- but I do know that if anything should be attacked, it's sexism, and the legacy of women's role in rock. It's a far, far more pressing concern than the problem of anti-semitism and homophobia in the music industry. Rock hates women; kids love rock. There's some kind of conflict there, some great potential for the planting and nurturing of some very negative seeds. I said before that rock doesn't necessarily encourage negative behaviour as much as discourages progressive behaviour; but the women problem is so much bigger, so more far reaching, so more prevalent than these other problems, that I have to believe it's gone beyond that. Women's role in rock, perhaps, shapes to some degree women's role in culture. But the women problem, which is a cancer compared to the racism/homophobia hangnail, does not effect the men who run the music industry. So it continues, with little protest.

To sum up (yeah, like I'm writing a fucking college paper, and like you're still with me): Men run the music industry. They could give a fuck about women, and they have drastically little empathy with those who don't share their experience -- blacks, the lesser educated, those without penises, etc. They're fascists who sell you entertainment, no matter what the human costs. A more extreme soul might say at this point, boycott the whole mishegas; but that's bullshit. Buy what you like. Write a letter here and there. Boycott Dominos Pizza (major funders of the anti-abortion movement). Bad people often make good music, and I know that I'll listen to what I like and reject what I don't, regardless of the politics (when it comes to music, I am far more offended by bad art than bad politics). And I would

13 never blame the artists for the sorry state of human values in rock music -- I blame the system that perpetuates it. Be aware that they're people out there, in the towers of 6th Avenue and the low-slung giant bungalows of Burbank, who want you to think that they're doing you a huge favor by worrying about a hangnail; meanwhile, they're blithely spreading cancer.

5/24/90 9 Days late

TOP 700 LPs 1975-1989!

TOP 700 RECORDS, 1975-1989:

It would be much better if this was the "top 700 of all time" instead, but it's hard enough deciding who's better, Minor Threat or Magazine, without having to compare Larry Williams and The Weirdos, or The Zombies and Zounds! Besides, since this was put together for a 10th anniversary issue, it seems more prudent to limit the list to the era of music covered here. But "Best of the 80's" rolls have become pretty boring lately, and besides, the whole punk/post-punk tradition didn't begin with the stroke of midnight 10 years ago, it really began when groups like Sex Pistols played their first gig in '75, or Ramones, or Saints, whoever, enlarging on what came before to create a fresh and well needed movement we're still enjoying the fruits of today.

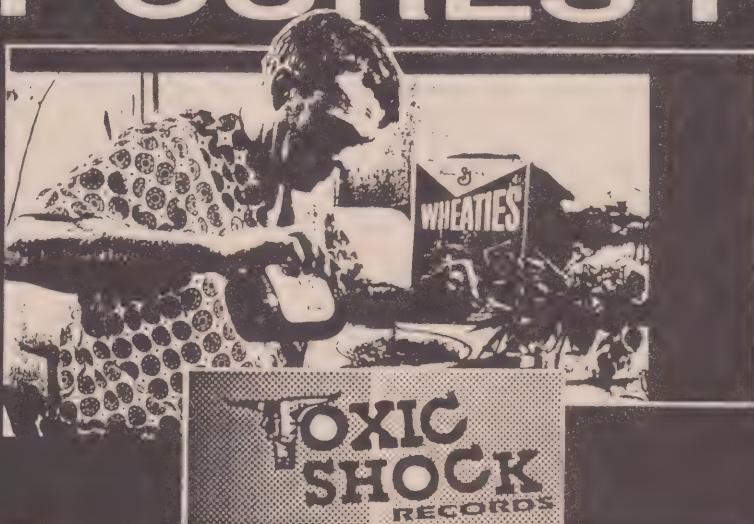
To be included on this roster, an album had to have been recorded from '75-'89, so no older vault recordings qualify. Having checked the contents after completion, I've already found a glaring omission or two, and I'm sure each and every one of you will submit dozens of albums that you feel are better than what's here. But this is one man's list, no more no less (let's face it folks, if I

the juice of the jungle vine THAT CURES FEAR



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AVENGERS-AVENGERS
83 (BACK COVER)



AZTEC CAMERA-HIGH
LAND HARD RAIN 83

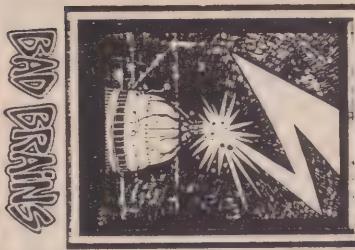
were stuck on a desert island, I'd never make do on a mere 10 LPs. Someone fly in my whole collection, quick! Or better yet, just rescue me already! At any case, here are the best 700 albums of my generation to date; the criteria, as with the record reviews, is merely how many times I played them over the years. Some have remained dusted on the shelves for years and years unplayed, but at one time meant enough to dominate my turntable for a blissful period of time, this is something we don't soon forget, even if we tire of that joy.

Now, why 700 you ask? Why not 500? Or 1000? Well, yes that would have been more normal, but 500 would have been too little to capture all the greatness of the last 15 years, and 1000 would have included too many of insufficient quality to merit their mention with the best of this list. No, a different rationale was used. Throwing out 1975, when the whole thing was barely getting started and only a few great LPs came out like Ramones 1st, that leaves 14 years of great albums and live shows. So if we budget 50 great albums per year, we end up with 700. That's a fair proportion I think, of lasting albums made in any year, though obviously, some will be more, some will be less.

Since this explanation will be too arbitrary for many of you, take heart, I've included a list of the top 100 of 1975-1989 after the top 700 list, broken down into the top 50 albums, followed by the next 50 best. This I thought would help those few of you who wish to use this as a guide to what to check out. And for those of you who have pretty extensive collections already, the top 200 are set in bold-face during the list of the top 700, in case you need a list longer than 100, but far short of a full 700 LPs to try to track down.

At any case, this list took 19 times longer than I'd expected, taking up over a week of time, but I wanted to do something useful for the anniversary issue, so here's hoping you find this of use, of entertainment, of debate, of history value. I welcome your comments! What the hell!

1. ADOLESCENTS-Adolescents (Frontier 81) L.A.
2. (RICK AGNEW)-All By Myself (Frontier 82)
3. ADVERTS-Crossing The Red Sea With The Adverts (Anchor UK 78) London
4. -Cast of Thousands (RCA UK 79)
5. (TV SMITH)-The Last Words Of The Great Explorer (Epic 81)
6. -Channel 5 (Expulsion UK 83)
7. AGENT ORANGE-Living In Darkness (Posh Boy 81) L.A.
8. -This Is The Voice (Enigma 86)
9. AGGRESSION-Don't Be Mistaken (BYO 83) So. Cal.
10. ALLEYCATS-Escape From The Planet Earth (MCA 82) L.A.
11. ALTERNATIVE T.V.-The Image Has Cracked (Deptford Fun City 78) London
12. ANGELIC UPSTARTS-We Gotta Get Out Of This Place (WEA UK 80) Eng.
13. ANGRY SAMOANS-Inside My Brain EP (Bad Trip 80) L.A./S.F.
14. ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE-We Are The League (Faulty 82) Eng.
15. ANTI-PASTI-Caution In The Wind (Rondelet UK 82) Eng.
16. AVENGERS-Avengers (CD Presents 83) S.F.
17. (PENELOPE HOUSTON)-Birdboys (Subterranean 89)
18. AZTEC CAMERA-High Land, Hard Rain (Sire 83) Scotland
19. -Knife (Sire 85)
20. BAD BRAINS-ROIR Cassette (ROIR 81) D.C./N.Y.
21. -Rock For Light (PVC 83)
22. -I Against I (SST 86)
23. -Live (SST 88)
24. BAD RELIGION-How Could Hell Be Any Worse? (Epitaph 81) L.A.
25. -Into The Unknown (Epitaph 83)



BAD BRAINS-ROIR
LIVE CASSETTE 81



THE CLASH-THE CLASH
77 (IMPORT VERSION)

Requirements must not be a single with 4 or more b-sides, significant length!

26. -Back to the Known EP (Epitaph 85)
27. -Suffer (Epitaph 87)
28. -No Control (Epitaph 89)
29. BATS-Daddy's Highway (Communion 88) New Zealand
30. BIG BLACK-Bulldozer EP (Ruthless/Fever 84) Chicago
31. -Racer X EP (Homestead 85)
32. -Atomizer (Homestead 86)
33. -Songs About Fucking (Touch and Go 87)
34. BLACK FLAG-Damaged (SST/Unicorn 81) L.A.
35. -Everything Went Black 78-81 (SST 83)
36. BLACK MARKET BABY-Senseless Offerings (Fountain of Youth 83) D.C.
37. BLITZ-Second Empire Justice (Future UK 83) Eng.
38. BLONDIE-Plastic Letters (Chrysalis 77) N.Y.
39. BLOODSPORT-I Am the Game (Homestead 85) Chicago
40. BLUEBELLES-Sisters (London UK 84) Scotland
41. BODINES-Played (Magnet UK 87) Eng.
42. BOYS-Alternative Chartbusters (NEMS UK 78) Eng.
43. BILLY BRAGG-Brewing Up With Billy Bragg (CD Presents 84) Eng.
44. -Talking With The Taxman About Poetry (Elektra 86)
45. -Workers Playtime (Elektra 88)
46. BREAKING CIRCUS-The Very Long Fuse (Homestead 85) Chicago/Minneapolis
47. -Ice Machine (Homestead 86)
48. -Smoker's Paradise EP (Homestead 87)
49. BUZZCOCKS-Another Music in a Different Kitchen (United Artists UK 78) Manchester
50. -Low Bites (United Artists UK 78)
51. -A Different Kind of Tension (I.R.S. 79)
52. -Singles Going Steady (Singles LP, I.R.S. 79)
53. -1-2-3 EP (Singles EP, I.R.S. 81)
54. -Lost We Forget Live 79-80 (ROIR Cassettes 88)
55. -Live at The Roxy 77 (Absolutely Free UK 89)
56. -Times Up '76 Demos (late 70's bootleg)
57. (PETE SHELLEY)-Homosapien (Arista 81)
58. (FLAG OF CONVENIENCE or F.O.C.)-Northwest Skyline (MCM UK 87)
59. -War on the Wireless Set (MCM 87)
60. CELEBRATE RIFLES-Kiss Kiss Bang Bang (What Goes On 87) Australia
61. CHAMELEONS-Script of The Bridge (Import version, Statik UK 83) Manchester
62. -What Does Anything Mean, Basically? (Statik UK 85)
63. -Strange Times (U.S. double LP version, Geffen 87)
64. -The Fan and The Bellows 81-83 (Caroline 89)
65. CHANNEL 3-Fear of Life (Posh Boy 82) L.A.
66. -After The Lights Go Out (Posh Boy 83)
67. CHELSEA-Chelsea (Step Forward UK 79) London
68. CHILLS-Kaleidoscope World (collection, Creation UK 86) New Zealand
69. -Brave Words (Homestead 88)
70. CHORDS-So Far Away (Polydor UK 80) Eng.
71. -No One Is Listening Anymore live 80 (Unicorn UK 86)
72. CHURCH-Heyday (WEA 85) Australia
73. CIRCLE JERKS-Group Sex (Frontier 80) L.A.
74. -Wild in the Streets (Faulty 82)
75. -Golden Shower of Hits (IAK 83)
76. CLASH-The Clash (import version, Epic UK 77) London
77. -Give 'Em Enough Rope (Epic 78)
78. -London Calling (double LP, Epic 79)
79. (101ers)-Elgin Avenue Breakdown (76 rec., Andalucia UK 81)
80. CLEAN-Compilation (collection, Homestead 89) New Zealand
81. COCTEAU TWINS-The Pink Opaque (4AD 85) Eng.
82. -Blue Bell Knowl (4AD 88)
83. CONSAT ANGELS-Waiting For a Miracle (Polydor UK 80) Sheffield
84. -Sleep No More (Polydor UK 81)
85. -Fiction (Polydor UK 82)
86. -Land (Jive 83) (Band known as "C.S. Angels" in U.S.)
87. -7 Day Weekend (Jive 85)
88. -Chasing Shadows (Island 86)
89. -Enz (singles 80-83, Polydor Holland)
90. ELVIS COSTELLO-My Aim Is True (CBS 77) Eng.
91. -This Year's Model (CBS 78)
92. -Armed Forces (CBS 79)
93. CRAMPS-Bad Music For Bad People (collection, I.R.S. 84) N.Y.
94. CRIPPLED PILGRIMS-Under Water (Fountain of Youth 85) D.C.
95. CROWD-A World Apart (Posh Boy 80) L.A.
96. CULTURCIDE-Culturcide (no label, 86) Texas
97. CURE-3 Imaginary Boys (import version, Fiction/Polydor UK 79) Eng.
98. -Seventeen Seconds (Fiction/Polydor UK 80)
99. -Faith (Fiction/Polydor UK 81)
100. -Carnage Visors (Faith tape, Fiction/Polydor UK 81)
101. -Pornography (A&M 82)
102. -The Top (Sire 84)
103. -Disintegration (Elektra 89)
104. -Concert (Fiction/Polydor UK 84)
105. -Curiosity (collection, Concert tape, Fiction/Polydor UK 84)
106. -Staring At The Sea (singles LP, Elektra 86)
107. DAMNED-Damned Damned Damned (Stiff UK 77) London
108. -Music For Pleasure (Stiff UK 77)
109. -Machine Gun Etiquette (Chiswick UK 79)
110. -The Black Album (import double LP version, Chiswick 80)
111. -Strawberries (Bronze UK 82)
112. -Phantasmagoria (MCA UK 85)
113. -Damned But Not Forgotten (80-82 collection, Dojo UK 85)
114. -Captain's Birthday Live at Roundhouse '77 (Stiff UK 86)
115. -Live at Shepperton 80 (Chiswick UK 82)
116. -Mindless Directionless Energy Live at Lyceum 81 (ID UK 87)



COMSAT ANGELS-SLEEP
NO MORE 81



DAMNED-STRAWBERRIES
82



ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN-
HEAVEN UP HERE 81



HEARTBREAKERS-LIVE
AT MAX'S 79

117. -Final Damnation live 88 (Essential UK 89)
 118. (CAPTAIN SENSIBLE)-Women and Captains First (A&M UK 81)
 119. -The Power of Love (A&M UK 82)
 120. -Revolution Now! (double LP, Deltic UK)
 121. DEAD BOYS-Young, Loud and Snotty (Sire 77) N.Y.
 122. -We Have Come For Your Children (Sire 78)
 123. DEAD KENNEDYS-Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables (I.R.S. 80) S.F.
 124. -In God We Trust Inc. (Alternative Tentacles 81)
 125. -Plastic Surgery Disasters (Alternative Tentacles 82)
 126. -Frankenchrist (Alternative Tentacles 85)
 127. -Bedtime For Democracy (Alternative Tentacles 86)
 128. (JELLO BIAFRA)-No More Cocomos (spoken word, Alternative Tentacles 87)
 129. -High Priest of Harmful Matter (s.w., Alternative Tentacles 89)
 130. DEL FUGGOS-The Longest Day (Slash 84) Boston
 131. DESCENDENTS-Milo Goes to College (New Alliance 82) L.A.
 132. -I Don't Want to Grow Up (SST 85)
 133. -All (SST 87)
 134. -Liveage live (SST 88)
 135. -Hallraker live (SST 89)
 136. (ALL)-Allroy's Revenge (Cruz 89)
 137. DEVO-Q: Are we Not Men? A: We Are Devo (WEA 87) Ohio
 138. DICKIES-Incredible Shrinking Dickies (A&M 79) L.A.
 139. -Dawn of the Dickies (A&M 80)
 140. -Stukas Over Disneyland (FVC 83)
 141. -Second Coming (Enigma 88)
 142. DIDJITS-Hey Jester (Touch and Go 88) Illinois
 143. DILS-Live (77, 80, XCO 87) L.A.
 144. (RANK AND FILE)-Sundown (Slash 82)
 145. -Long Gone Dead (Slash 84)
 146. (BLACKBIRD)-Blackbird (Illoki 88)
 147. -Blackbird (Illoki 89)
 148. DINOSAUR or DINOSAUR JR.-Dinosaur (Homestead 85) Boston
 149. -You're Living All Over Me (SST 87)
 150. -Bug (SST 89)
 151. D.O.A.-Something Better Change (Friends CAN 80) Vancouver, CAN
 152. -Hardcore '81 (Friends CAN 81)
 153. -War on 45 (Alternative Tentacles/Faulty 82)
 154. -Let's Wreck The Party (Alternative Tentacles 85)
 155. (RANDY RAMPAGE)-Randy Rampage EP (Friends CAN 82)
 156. DOWNIE MILDEN-Broomtree (Texas Hotel 87) L.A.
 157. -Mincing Steps (Texas Hotel 88)
 158. DRONES-Further Temptations (Valer UK 77) Manchester
 159. EASTERHOUSE-Contenders (Rough Trade UK 85) Manchester
 160. EATER-The Album (The Label UK 77) London
 161. ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN-Crocodiles (Sire 80) Liverpool
 162. -Heaven Up Here (Sire 81)
 163. -Porcupine (Sire 82)
 164. -Ocean Rain (Sire 84)
 165. -Echo & The Bunnymen (Sire 87)
 166. -Songs to Learn and Sing (singles, Sire 86)
 167. (IAN MCCULLOCH)-Cardieland (Sire 89)
 168. EFFIGIES-Haunted Town (Autumn 81) Chicago
 169. -Forever Grounded (Ruthless/Fever 84)
 170. -Fly on a Wire (Ruthless/Fever 85)
 171. -Ink (Ruthless/Fever 86)
 172. F-WORD-Like it or Not Live (Posh Boy 78) L.A.
 173. FFAR-The Record (Slash 82) L.A.
 174. FIRE ENGINES-Fire Engines (Fast/Rough Trade 81) Scotland I think
 175. FLESHTEARS-No Questions Asked (Upsetter 80) L.A.
 176. -A Minute to Pray, A Second to Die (Ruby/Slash 81)
 177. -Live (Homestead 85)
 178. FLIPPER-Album (Subterranean 81) S.P.
 179. FLOWER-Concrete (Bear 88) N.Y.
 180. FLYBOYS-Flyboys EP (Frontier 80) L.A.
 181. (CHOIR INVISIBLE)-Choir Invisible (Frontier 81)
 182. -Sea To Shining Sea EP (FVC 84)
 183. FOR AGAINST-Echelons (Independent Projects 87) Nebraska
 184. -December (Independent Projects 88)
 185. GANG OF FOUR-Entertainment (EMI 79) Eng.
 186. -Solid Gold (EMI 81)
 187. GAS-Emotional Warfare (Polydor UK 82) London
 188. -From the Cradle to The Grave (Good Vibrations UK 83)
 189. GEARS-Rockin' at Ground Zero (Playgemi 80) L.A.
 190. GENERATION X-Generation X (import version, Chrysalis UK 78) London
 191. -Valley of The Dolls (Chrysalis 79)
 192. -Kiss Me Deadly (Chrysalis UK 81)
 193. (EMPIRE)-Expensive Sound (Dinosaur UK 81)
 194. GERMS-GI (Slash 79) L.A.
 195. GO-BETWEENS-Spring Hill Fair (Sire 84) Australia
 196. -Tallulah (Big Time 87)
 197. -16 Lovers Lane (Beggars Banquet 88)
 198. GOVERNMENT ISSUE-Government Issue (Fountain on Youth 86) D.C.
 199. -You (Giant 87)
 200. HAPPY HATE ME NOTS-Out (Rough Trade 88) Australia
 201. HEART ATTACK-Keep Your Distance EP (Serious Clown 83)
 202. HEARTBREAKERS-L.A.M.F. (Track UK 77) N.Y.
 203. -Live at Max's Kansas City (Max's Kansas City 79)
 204. -Live at Speakeasy 77 (Jungle UK 82)
 205. -Live at Lyceum 84 (ABC UK 85)
 206. (JOHNNY THUNDERS)-So Alone (Real UK 78)
 207. HECTOR (PENALOSA)-Hector (Cryptovision 88) S.F.
 208. RICHARD HELL & THE VOIDOIDS-Blank Generation (Sire 77) N.Y.

209. HOODOO GURUS-Stoneage Romeo (A&M 84) Australia
 210. -Mars Need Guitars (Big Time 85)
 211. HOUSE OF LOVE-House of Love (Creation/Relativity 88) London
 212. HUGO LARGO-Drum (Relativity 87) N.Y.
 213. -Mettle (Opal/WEA 89)
 214. HUMAN HANDS-double LP compilation (Independent Projects 82) L.A.
 215. HURRAY-Boxed (singles, Kitchenware UK 85) Eng.
 216. HUSKER DU-Metal Circus (SST 83) Minneapolis
 217. -Zen Arcade (double LP, SST 84)
 218. -New Day Rising (SST 85)
 219. -Flip Your Wig (SST 85)
 220. -Candy Apple Grey (WEA 86)
 221. -Warehouse Songs and Stories (double LP, WEA 87)
 222. (BOB MOULD)-Workbook (Virgin 89)
 223. JAM-IN The City (Polydor UK 77) London
 224. -This is The Modern World (Polydor UK 77)
 225. -All Mod Cons (Polydor UK 79)
 226. -Setting Sons (Polydor UK 80)
 227. -Sound Affects (Polydor 80)
 228. -Dig The New Breed live (Polydor 83)
 229. -Snap (singles, Polydor 83)
 230. JASINE MINKS-1,2,3,4,5,6,7 All Good Preachers Go To Heaven (Creation UK 85) Eng.
 231. JASON AND THE (NASHVILLE) SCORCHERS-Fever EP (Praxis 83) Nashville
 232. -Lost and Found (EMI 85)
 233. JONESES-Criminals EP (American Standard 83) L.A.
 234. JOSEPH K.-The Only Fun in Town (Postcard UK 81) Scotland
 235. -Young and Stupid Endless Soul (collection, Supreme UK 87)
 236. JOY DIVISION-Novel Pleasures (Factory 79) Manchester
 237. -Closer (Factory 80)
 238. -Still (collection, Factory 81)
 239. -Substance (collection, Quest/WEA 88)
 240. KILLING JOKE-Killing Joke (Editions EG 80) Eng.
 241. -What's This For.....! (Editions EG 81)
 242. -Nighttime (Editions EG 85)
 243. -Brighter Than a Thousand Suns (Editions EG 86)
 244. KRAFTWERK-The Man Machine (Capitol 77) Germany
 245. KRAUT-An Adjustment to Society (Cabbage/Faulty 82) N.Y.
 246. -Whetting The Scythe (Enigma 84)
 247. LAST-L.A. Explosion (Bomp 79) L.A.
 248. -Look Again (never released 2nd LP bootleg, 80)
 249. -Painting Smiles on a Dead Man (Lolita FRANCE 83)
 250. -Confession (SST 87)
 251. -Awakening (SST 89)
 252. LEAGAL WEAPON-No Sorrow EP (Arsenal 81) L.A.
 253. -Death of Innocence (Arsenal 82)
 254. -Your Weapon (Arsenal 83)
 255. LEAVING TRAINS-Well Down Blue Highway (Enigma 84) L.A.
 256. -Kill Tunes (SST 86)
 257. -Fuck (SST 87)
 258. -Transportational D. Vices (SST 89)
 259. LIBERTINES-Ohio (cassette only, Day One 87) Cincinnati
 260. -Tilt-a-Whirl (Mega Disc HOLLAND 89)
 261. LORD JOHN-SIX Days of Sound (Bomp 87) New Jersey
 262. LUCY SHOW-Undone (A&M 85) London
 263. -Mania (Big Time 86)
 264. LYERS-A Promise is a Promise (Ace of Hearts 88) Boston
 265. MADNESS-One Step Beyond (Sire 79) Eng.
 266. MAGAZINE-Real Life (Virgin UK 78) Manchester
 267. -Secondhand Daylight (Virgin UK 79)
 268. -The Correct Use of Soap (Virgin 80)
 269. -After the Fact (singles, I.R.S. 82)
 270. -Play live (I.R.S. 80)
 271. (HOWARD DEVOTO)-Jerky Versions of The Dream (I.R.S. 83)
 272. (LUDURIA)-Unanswerable Lust (Beggars Banquet 88)
 273. MAN SIZED ACTION-Five Story Garage (Reflex/Dutch East 84) Minneapolis
 274. MARCH VIOLETS-Natural History (singles, Rebirth UK 84) Eng.
 275. MARGIN-MAN-Identity (Dischord 84) D.C.
 276. MEATMEAT-War of the Superbikes (Homestead 85) D.C.
 277. MEGA CITY 4-Tranzphobia (Decoy UK 89) Eng.
 278. MEKONS-The Quality of Mercy is Not Strayed (Virgin UK 79)
 279. MEMBER-At The Chelsea Nightclub (Virgin 79) Eng.
 280. -1980-The Choice is Yours (Virgin U.K. 80)
 281. M.I.A.-Last Rites of M.I.A. (and Genocide) (Smoke 7 82) Las Vegas/L.A.
 282. -Notes From the Underground (National Trust 85)
 283. -After the Fact (Flipside 87)
 284. MICRONOTZ-40 Fingers (Homestead 86) Kansas
 285. MINOR THREAT-Out of Step (Dischord 83) D.C.
 286. (EMERACE)-Embrace (Dischord 87)
 287. (FUGAZI)-Fugazi EP (Dischord 88)
 288. MINUTEMEN-Buzz or Howl Under the Influence of Heat (SST 83) L.A.
 289. (FIREHOSE)-Ragin' Full On (SST 86)
 290. MISFITS-Walk Among Us (Ruby/Slash 82) N.Y.
 291. -Legacy of Brutality (collection, Caroline 88)
 292. -20 Hits (collection, Caroline 88)
 293. MISSION OF BURMA-Signals Calls and Marches EP (Ace of Hearts 81) Boston
 294. -Vs. (Ace of Hearts 82)
 295. -Mission of Burma EP (Taang! 87)
 296. -Forget (Taang! 88)
 297. -The Horrible Truth About Burma live (Ace of Hearts 85)
 298. MODERN LOVERS-Modern Lovers (Berkeley 76) Rhode Island
 299. MODERNETTES-Teen City EP (Quintessence CAN 80) Vancouver, CAN
 300. -View From the Bottom (Vox Desperation 82)



LEAVING TRAINS-
KILL TUNES 86



LUCY SHOW-UNDONE 85



RAMONES-RAMONES 76



R.E.M.-MURMUR 83

301. JOHNNY MOPED-Cycledelic (Chiswick UK 78) London
 302. MOSS POLES-Shorn (Idea UK 87) Eng.
 303. MOTORHEAD-No Remorse (double LP collection 87) Eng.
 304. MOVING TARGETS-Burning in Water (Taang 86) Boston
 305. NAKED RAYGUN-Basement Screams EP (Ruthless 83) Chicago
 306. -Throb Throb (Homestead 85)
 307. -All Rise (Homestead 86)
 308. -Jettison (Caroline 88)
 309. -Understand? (Caroline 89)
 310. NAMES-Swimming (Crepuscule BELGIUM 82) Eng.
 311. NEATS-The Monkey's Head in the Corner of the Room (Ace of Hearts 82) Boston
 312. -Neats (Ace of Hearts 83)
 313. NECROS-Conquest For Death (Touch and Go 83) Ohio
 314. NUEROTICS or NEWTON NUEROTICS-Beggars Can Be Choosers (Razor UK 83) Eng.
 315. -Repercussions (Jungle UK 86)
 316. -Is Your Washroom Breeding Bolsheviks? (Jungle UK 88)
 317. -Kickstarting a Backbreeding Nation live (Jungle UK 87)
 318. NEW MODEL ARMY-Vengeance (Abstract UK 84) Bradford, UK
 319. -No Rest for the Wicked (Capitol/EMI 85)
 320. -The Ghost of Cain (Capitol/EMI 86)
 321. -Radio Sessions 83-84 (Abstract 88)
 322. NIHILISTICS-Nihilistics (Braineater 83) N.Y.
 323. NINE NINE NINE-Nine Nine Nine (United Artists US 78) London
 324. -Separates (import version, United Artists UK 78)
 325. -The Biggest Prize in Sport (PVC 80)
 326. -Concrete (Polydor 81)
 327. -Face to Face (Libritain UK)
 328. -Live and Loud live (Link UK 89)
 329. -Singles LP (United Artists UK 80)
 330. NILS-Nils EP (Cassette only, Nils CN 83) Montreal
 331. -Nils (Rock Hotel 87)
 332. NUNS-Nuns (Posh Boy 80) S.F./N.Y./L.A.
 333. OCTOBER DAYS-Do The Right Thing (Aum 82) Connecticut
 334. OH OK-Furthermore What EP (DE 83) Athens, GA
 335. 100 FLOWERS or THE URINALS-100 Flowers (Happy Squid 83) L.A.
 336. -Drawing Fire EP (Happy Squid 84)
 337. ONLY ONES-Only Ones (CBS UK 78) Eng.
 338. -Even Serpents Shine (CBS UK 79)
 339. -Baby's Got a Gun (Epic UK 80)
 340. ORANGE JUICE-You Can't Hide Your Love Forever (Polydor UK 82) Scotland
 341. -In a Nutshell (collection, Polydor UK 85)
 342. (EDWARD COLLINS)-Hope and Despair (Demon UK 89)
 343. ROY ORBISON-Mystery Girl (Virgin 89)
 344. OUTSKIRTS-Self Conscious Over You (Good Vibrations IRE 79) Belfast, IRE
 345. OUTSKIRTS-Heavens on the Move EP (Glass UK 85) London
 346. PAGNIS-Buried Alive (Treehouse 86) Cleveland
 347. PASSIONS-Thirty Thousand Feet Over China (Polydor UK 81) London
 348. -Sanctuary (Polydor UK 82)
 349. PENETRATION-Moving Targets (Virgin UK 78) Manchester
 350. -Coming Up For Air (Virgin UK 79)
 351. -Race Against Time (Clifdayn UK 79)
 352. (PAULINE MURRAY AND THE INVISIBLE GIRLS)-The Invisible Girls (Illusive UK 80)
 353. (PAULINE MURRAY)-Storm Clouds (Big Cat UK 89)
 354. PERE UBU-Terminus Tower (collection, Twin/Tone 85) Cleveland
 355. PLUGZ (later CRUZADOS)-Electricity Me (Plugz 79) L.A.
 356. -Better Luck (Fatime 81)
 357. POINTED STICKS-Perfect Youth (Quintessence CAN 80) Vancouver, CAN
 358. IGGY POP (AND JAMES WILLIAMSON)-Kill City (Bong 78) Detroit/N.Y.
 359. IGGY POP-The Idiot (RCA 77)
 360. -Lust For Life (RCA 77)
 361. -New Values (Arista 79)
 362. -Soldier (Arista 80)
 363. -Party (Arista 81)
 364. -TV Eye live (RCA 78)
 365. PRIMAL SCREAM-Sonic Flower Grove (Elevation/WEA UK 87)
 366. PROLETARIAT-Indifference (Homestead 85) Boston
 367. PSYCHEDELIC FURS-Psychedelic Furs (import version, CBS UK 80) London
 368. -Talk Talk Talk (CBS 81)
 369. -Forever Now (CBS 82)
 370. -Book of Days (CBS 89)
 371. PURPLE HEARTS-Beat That (Fiction UK 80) Eng.
 372. RAMONES-Ramones (Sire 76) N.Y.
 373. -Leave Home (Sire 77)
 374. -Rocket to Russia (Sire 77)
 375. -Road to Ruin (Sire 78)
 376. -It's Alive live (Sire UK 79)
 377. REACTIONS-Cracked Marbles (Homestead 86) Cleveland
 378. RED CROSS or REDD KROSS-Annette's Got The Hits EP (Posh Boy 80) L.A.
 379. -Teen Babes From Monsanto (Gasatanka/Enigma 84)
 380. RED LETTER DAY-Soft Lights & Loud Guitars (Released Emotions UK 88) Portsmouth/UK
 381. RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY-Talk About The Weather (Red Rhino UK 85) Leeds, UK
 382. -Paint Your Wagon (Red Rhino UK 86)
 383. -Nothing Wrong (Situation II UK 88)
 384. -Smashed Hits (singles, Red Rhino UK 87)
 385. RED ROCKERS-Condition Red (415/CBS 81) New Orleans
 386. REDUCERS-Let's Go (Rave On 84) Connecticut
 387. R.E.M.-Chronic Town EP (I.R.S. 82) Athens, GA
 388. -Murmur (I.R.S. 83)
 389. -Reckoning (I.R.S. 84)
 390. -Fables of The Reconstruction (I.R.S. 85)
 391. -Lifes Rich Pageant (I.R.S. 86)
 392. -Document (I.R.S. 87)

393. -Green (WEA 88)
 394. -Dead Letter Office (b-sides, I.R.S. 87)
 395. REPLACEMENTS-Sorry Mom, Forgot to Take Out The Trash (Twin/Tone 81) Minneapolis
 396. -Replacements Stink (Twin/Tone 82)
 397. -Hootenany (Twin/Tone 83)
 398. -Let it Be (Twin/Tone 84)
 399. -Tim (Size 85)
 400. -Pleased to Meet Me (Sire 87)
 401. -Don't Tell a Soul (Sire 89)
 402. REZILLOS-Can't Stand The Rezillos (Sire 78) Scotland
 403. -Mission Accomplished, But The Beat Goes On live (Sire UK 79)
 404. RHINO 39-Rhino 39 (XXX 86) L.A.
 405. RICH KIDS-Ghosts of Princes in Towers (EMI/UK 78) London
 406. RUTS or RUTS D.C.-The Crack (Virgin 79) London
 407. -Grun and Bear It (Virgin UK 80)
 408. -Animal Now (Virgin UK 81)
 409. -Rhythm Collision, Vol. 1 (Bohemian UK 82)
 410. -Live and Loud (Link UK 87)
 411. (KEVIN COYNE)-Sanity Stomp (double LP, Virgin UK 80)
 412. SAINTS-I'm Stranded (Sire 77) Brisbane/Sydney AUS, London
 413. -Eternally Yours (Sire 78)
 414. -Prehistoric Sounds (Harvest/EMI UK 78)
 415. -Paralytic Tonight, Dublin Tomorrow EP (New Rose FRANCE 79)
 416. -The Monkey Puzzle (New Rose FRANCE 80)
 417. -Out in the Jungle (New Rose FRANCE 82) (in AUS: "Casablanca")
 418. -A Little Madness to Be Free (New Rose FRANCE 84)
 419. -All Fool's Day (TVT 86)
 420. -Prodigal Son (TVT 88)
 421. -Scarce Saints (1/2 live, Raven AUS 89)
 422. (CHRIS BAILEY)-Casablanca (New Rose FRANCE 83)
 423. -What We Did on Our Holidays (New Rose FRANCE 84)
 424. (LAUGHING CLOWNS)-Laughing Clowns (Red Flame UK 82)
 425. -Laughter Around the Table (Red Flame UK 83)
 426. (ED KEUPPER)-Electrical Storm (Hot UK 85)
 427. -Rooms of The Magnificent (Hot UK 86)
 428. -Everybody's Got To (Capitol 89)
 429. SALEM 66-Salem 66 EP (Homestead 84) Boston
 430. -A Ripping Spin (Homestead 85)
 431. -Frequency and Urgency (Homestead 87)
 432. -Natural Disasters, National Treasures (Homestead 88)
 433. SALVATION ARMY or THREE O'CLOCK-Salvation Army (Frontier 81) L.A.
 434. -Baroque Hoedown (Frontier 82)
 435. -16 Tambourines (Frontier 83)
 436. -Arrive Without Traveling (I.R.S. 85)
 437. SAVAGE REPUBLIC-Ceremonial (Independent Projects 83) L.A.
 438. -Trudge (Independent Projects 85)
 439. -Jamahirya (Fundamental 88)
 440. -Live Trek (Fundamental 87)
 441. SCARS-Author! Author! (Pre-Charisma UK 81) Eng.
 442. SCRAWL-Plus Also Two (No Other 87) Columbus, Ohio
 443. SCREAM-Still Screaming (Dischord 82) D.C.
 444. SECRET AFFAIR-Glory Boys (Sire 79) Eng.
 445. -Behind Closed Doors (Sire 80)
 446. -Business as Usual (I-Spy/Arista UK)
 447. SECRET SYDE-Hidden Secrets (Muttha 83) New Jersey
 448. SEX PISTOLS-Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols (WEA 77) London
 449. -The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle (double LP, Virgin UK 79)
 450. (PROFESSIONALS)-I Didn't See It Coming (Virgin UK 81)
 451. (PUBLIC IMAGE LTD. or PIL)-Public Image Ltd. (Virgin UK 78)
 452. SHAM 69-Tell Us The Truth (half live, Sire 78) London
 453. SHAM 69-Tell Us The Truth (half live, Sire 78) London
 454. -That's Life (Polydor UK 78)
 455. -Hersham Boys (Polydor UK 79)
 456. -The Game (Polydor UK 80)
 457. -Live and Loud (Link UK 87)
 458. -Live and Loud II (Link UK 88)
 459. -The First, The Best and The Last (singles, Polydor UK 80)
 460. (JIMMY PURSEY)-Imagination Camouflage (Polydor UK 80)
 461. SHAMEN-Drop (Moksha UK 87) Eng.
 462. SHATTERED FAITH-Live (1/2 live, Prophet 82) L.A.
 463. -Vol. 2 (Erika 85)
 464. SIMPLE MINDS-Life in a Day (PVC 79) Scotland
 465. -Real to Real Cacophony (Zoom/Arista UK 80)
 466. -Empires and Dance (Zoom/Arista UK 80)
 467. -Sons and Fascination (double LP version with #468, Virgin UK 81)
 468. -Sisters Feelings Cali (Virgin UK 81, originally double of #467)
 469. -New Gold Dream (A&M 82)
 470. -Sparkle in the Rain (A&M 84)
 471. SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES-The Scream (Polydor UK 78) London
 472. -Join Hands (Polydor UK 79)
 473. -Kaleidoscope (PVC 80)
 474. -Juju (PVC 81)
 475. -A Kiss in The Dreamhouse (Polydor UK 82)
 476. -Hyena (Geffen 84)
 477. -Tinderbox (Geffen 86)
 478. -Through The Looking Glass (covers, Geffen 87)
 479. -Peep Show (Geffen 88)
 480. -Nocturne live (double LP, Polydor UK 83)
 481. -Once Upon a Time (singles, PVC 81)
 482. SISTERS OF MERCY-First and Last and Always (Elektra 85) Eng.
 483. SKIDS-Scared to Dance (Virgin 79) Scotland
 484. -Days in Europa (Virgin UK 79)



THE RUTS—GRIN
AND BEAR IT 80



SAINTS—ETERNALLY
YOURS 78



SEX PISTOLS—NEVER
MIND THE BOLLOCKS 77



SIMPLE MINDS—NEW
GOLD DREAM 82

485. —The Absolute Game (original double LP version, Virgin UK 80)
 486. (BIG COUNTRY)—The Crossing (Mercury 83)
 487. —Steeltown (Mercury 84)
 488. SKREWDRIVER—All Screwed Up (Chiswick UK 77) Eng.
 489. SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS or SLAUGHTER—Do It Dog Style (Decca UK 78) Manchester
 490. —Bite Back (DJM UK 80)
 491. —Live Slaughter Rabid Dogs (Rabid UK 78)
 492. —Live at the Factory 79 (Thrush UK 81)
 493. SLEEPERS—Painless Nights (Adolescent 81) S.F.
 494. SLITS—Cut (Antilles UK 79) London
 495. —Double Peel Sessions (Strange Fruit UK 89)
 496. PATTI SMITH—Wave (Arista 79) N.Y.
 497. SMITHS—The Smiths (Sire 84) Manchester
 498. —Meat is Murder (Sire 85)
 499. —The Queen is Dead (Sire 86)
 500. —Strangeways Here We Come (Sire 87)
 501. —Rank live (Rough Trade UK 88)
 502. —Hatfull of Hollow (B-sides + BBC Sessions, Rough Trade UK 84)
 503. —Louder Than Bombs (B-sides double LP, Sire 87)
 504. (MORRISEY)—Viva Hate (Sire 88)
 505. SNAKE CORPS—Flesh on Flesh (Midnight UK 85) Eng.
 506. SOCIAL DISTORTION—Mommy's Little Monster (13th Floor 83) L.A.
 507. —Prison Bound (Restless/Enigma 88)
 508. SOCIAL UNREST—Rat in a Maze (Libertine 82)
 509. SOUND-Jeopardy (Korova/WEA UK 80) London
 510. —From the Lion's Mouth (Korova/WEA UK 81)
 511. —All Fall Down (Korova/WEA UK 82)
 512. —Shock of Daylight (A&M 84)
 513. —Heads and Hearts (Statik UK 85)
 514. —Thunder Up (Nettwerk CAN 87)
 515. (ADRIAN BORLAND AND THE CITIZENS)—Alexandria (Play it Again Sam BELGIUM 89)
 516. (OUTSIDERS)—Close Up (Raw Edge UK 78)
 517. (SECOND LAYER)—World of Rubber (Cherry Red UK 79)
 518. SPECIALS—The Specials Chrysalis 79) Coventry Eng.
 519. SPILZLES—Spiky Dream Flowers (A&M 81) London
 520. SQUIRREL BAIT—Squirrel Bait (Homestead 85) Kentucky
 521. —Stag Heaven (Homestead 86)
 522. S.S. DECONVOLT—How We Rock (Modern Method 84) Boston
 523. STIFF LITTLE FINGERS—Inflammable Material (Rough Trade UK 79) Belfast, IRE
 524. —Nobody's Heroes (Chrysalis 80)
 525. —Go For It! (Chrysalis 81)
 526. —Now Then... (Chrysalis UK 82)
 527. —Peel Sessions 79-81 LP (Strange Fruit UK 89)
 528. —Manx! live (Chrysalis 80)
 529. —Live and Lou (double LP, Link UK 88)
 530. —See You Up There live (double LP, Caroline 89)
 531. —All The Best (double singles LP, Chrysalis UK 83)
 532. STONE ROSES—Stone Roses (Silvertone/RCA 89) Manchester
 533. STRANGLERS—IV Rattus Norvegicus (A&M 77) London
 534. —No More Heroes (A&M 77)
 535. —Black and White (A&M 78)
 536. —The Raven (United Artists UK 79)
 537. —The Meninblack (Stiff 81)
 538. —La Folie (Liberty UK 81)
 539. —Feline (Epic 83)
 540. —Aural Sculpture (Epic 84)
 541. —Dreamtime (Epic 86)
 542. —Live X-Cart (United Artists UK 79)
 543. —All Live and All The Night live (Epic 88)
 544. —Off The Beaten Track (B-sides, Liberty UK 86)
 545. STRAPS—Straps (Cyclops UK 82)
 546. STRIKE UNDER—Immediate Action EP (Wax Trax 82) Chicago
 547. SUBHCMANS—Incorrect Thoughts (Friends CAN 80) Vancouver, CAN
 548. —No Wishes, No Prayers (SST 83)
 549. SUBWAY SECT—Retrospective 77-81 (Rough Trade UK 84) London
 550. SUICIDE—Suicide (Red Star 77) N.Y.
 551. TALKING HEADS—Talking Heads '77 (Sire 77) N.Y.
 552. —More Songs About Buildings and Food (Sire 78)
 553. —Fear of Music (Sire 79)
 554. TEARDROP EXPLODES—Kilimanjaro (Mercury 80) Liverpool
 555. —Wilder (Mercury 81)
 556. (JULIAN COPE)—World Shut Your Mouth (Mercury UK 84)
 557. —Fried (Mercury UK 84)
 558. —St. Julian (Island 87)
 559. TELEVISION—Marquee Moon (Elektra 77) N.Y.
 560. THATCHER ON ACID—Mondance EP (All The Madmen UK 86) London
 561. —Curdled (All The Madmen UK 87)
 562. —Live (Seep UK 88)
 563. THEATER OF HATE—Westworld (Burning Rome UK 82) London
 564. —Revolution (singles LP, Burning Rome UK 84)
 565. —He Who Dares Wins live (Burning Rome UK 84)
 566. (SPEAR OF DESTINY)—One Eyed Jacks (Epic UK 84)
 567. —World Service (Epic UK 85)
 568. THIS MORTAL COIL—It'll End in Tears (4AD UK 85) Eng.
 569. —Filigree and Shadow (4AD UK 86)
 570. THREE JOHNS—Atom Drum Pop (Abstract UK 84) Eng.
 571. —The World By Storm (Abstract UK 86)
 572. —The Death of Everything (Caroline 88)
 573. —Live in Chicago (Last Time Around 86)
 574. TOXIC REASONS—Independence (Risky 82) Dayton/S.F./Indianapolis
 575. —Kill By Remote Control (Rough Trade 84)
 576. —Within These Walls (Rough Trade 85)

577. —Bullets For You (Rough Trade 86)
 578. TOY DOLLS—Dig That Groove Baby (Volume UK 83) Eng.
 579. —A Far Out Disc (Volume UK 85)
 580. T.S.O.L.—TRUE SOUNDS OF LIBERTY—T.S.O.L. EP (Posh Boy 81) L.A.
 581. —Dance With Me (Frontier 81)
 582. —Beneath The Shadows (Alternative Tentacles 82)
 583. —Thoughts of Yesterday 81-82 (Posh Boy 87)
 584. TV21-A Thin Red Line (Dream UK 81) Eng.
 585. U.K.—DECAY—For Madmen Only (Fresh UK 81) Eng.
 586. U.K.—SUBS—Another Kind of Blues (Gem UK 79)
 587. —Brand New Age (Gem UK 80)
 588. —Diminished Responsibility (Gem UK 81)
 589. —Endangered Species (Nems UK 82)
 590. —Live Kicks (Stiff UK 80)
 591. —Crash Course live (Gem UK 80)
 592. —Demonstration Tapes 79-81 (Konexion UK 85)
 593. —A.W.O.L. 82 (New Red Archives 85)
 594. (CHARLIE HARPER)—Stolen Property live (Flickknife UK 81)
 595. (CHARLIE HARPER'S URBAN DOGS—Urban Dogs (Fallout UK 83)
 596. U2—Boy (Island 80) Dublin, IRE
 597. —October (Island 81)
 598. —War (Island 83)
 599. —The Unforgettable Fire (Island 84)
 600. —The Joshua Tree (Island 87)
 601. —Under a Blood Red Sky live (Island 83)
 602. UNDERTONES—Undertones (Sire 79) Derry, IRE
 603. —Hypnotized (Sire 80)
 604. —Positive Touch (EMI UK 81)
 605. —The Sin of Pride (EMI UK 83)
 606. —The Peal Sessions LP 79-82 (Strange Fruit UK 89)
 607. —All Wrapped Up (double singles LP, EMI UK 83)
 608. (THAT PETROL EMOTION)—Manic Pop Thrill (Demon UK 86)
 609. —Babie (Polygram 87)
 610. —End of the Millennium Psychosis Blues (Virgin 88)
 611. —Live (Mansfield UK 88)
 612. U.X.A.—Illusions of Grandeur (Posh Boy 81) S.F./L.A.
 613. VANDALS—Peace Thru Vandals (Epitaph 82) L.A.
 614. VIBRATORS—Pure Mania (CBS UK 77) London
 615. —V7 (CBS UK 78)
 616. VILETONES—Saturday Night, Sunday Morning (Topaz CAN 83) Toronto, CAN
 617. VOLCANO SUNS—The Bright Orange Years (Homestead 85) Boston
 618. WAH! or THE MIGHTY WAH!—Nah Poo The Art of Bluff (Eternal UK 81) Liverpool
 619. —The Maverick Years 80-81 (Wonderful World UK 82)
 620. —A Word to the Wise Guy (double LP, Beggars Banquet UK 84)
 621. —The Way We Wah! (greatest hits, WEA UK 84)
 622. WALL OF VODOO—Wall of Voodoo EP (I.R.S. 80) L.A.
 623. —Dark Continent (I.R.S. 81)
 624. —Call of The West (I.R.S. 82)
 625. (STAN RIDGEWAY)—The Big Heat (I.R.S. 86)
 626. WEDDING PRESENT—Tommy (singles LP, Reception UK 87) Eng.
 627. WEDNESDAY WEEK—Betty's House EP (Warfrat 83) L.A.
 628. —What We Had (Enigma 86)
 629. WEIRDOS—Who What Where Why EP (Bomp 79) L.A.
 630. DAVID WESTLAKE—David Westlake EP (Creation UK 87) London
 631. WILD FLOWERS—The Joy of It All (Reflex UK 85) Eng.
 632. —Dust (Chapter 22 UK 87)
 633. WIPERS—Is This Real? (Park 80) Portland, ORE
 634. —Youth of America (Park 81)
 635. —Over The Edge (Braineater 83)
 636. —Land of The Lost (Restless/Enigma 86)
 637. —Follow Blind (Restless/Enigma 87)
 638. —The Circle (Restless/Enigma 88)
 639. —Live 84 (Restless Enigma 85)
 640. (GREG SAGE)—Straight Ahead (Restless/Enigma 85)
 641. WIRE—Pink Flag (Harvest UK 77) London
 642. —Chair Missing (Harvest UK 78)
 643. —154 (WEA 79)
 644. —The Ideal Copy (Mute/Enigma 87)
 645. —A Bell Is a Cup Until It's Struck (Mute/Enigma 88)
 646. —Document and Eyewitness live (double LP, Rough Trade UK 81)
 647. —It's Beginning To and Back Again live (Mute/Enigma 89)
 648. (COLIN NEWMAN)—A-Z (Beggars Banquet UK 80)
 649. —Provisionally Entitled The Singing Fish (4AD UK 81)
 650. —Not To (4AD UK 82)
 651. —Commercial Suicide (Mute/Enigma 87)
 652. —It Seems (Mute/Enigma 88)
 653. WORDER STUFF—8 Legged Groove Machine (Polygram 88) Birmingham, Eng
 654. —Hup (Polygram 89)
 655. X-LOS ANGELES (Slash 80) L.A.
 656. —Wild Gift (Slash 81)
 657. —Under The Big Black Sun (Elektra 82)
 658. —More Fun in the New World (Elektra 83)
 659. X-RAY SPEX—Germ Free Adolescents (EMI UK 78) London
 660. (POLY STYRENE)—Translucence (United Artists UK 80)
 661. XTC—White Music (Virgin UK 78) Eng.
 662. —Go 2 (Virgin UK 78)
 663. —Drums and Wires (Virgin 79) Eng.
 664. —Black Sea (Virgin 80)
 665. —English Settlement (import double LP version, Virgin UK 82)
 666. —Nummer (Geffen 83)
 667. —The Big Express (Geffen 84)
 668. —Skylarking (Geffen 86)
 669. —Oranges and Lemons (double LP, Geffen 89)

THE SMITHS

"STRANGWAYS, HERE WE COME"



SMITHS-STRANGWAYS
HERE WE COME 87



THE SOUND-HEADS
AND HEARTS 85



WIPERS-YOUTH
OF AMERICA 81



WIRE-154 79

670. (DUKES OF STRATOSPHERE)-25 O'Clock (Virgin 85 UK)
 671. -Psionic Psounspot (Geffen 87)
 672. YOUTH BRIGADE-Sound and Fury I (BYO 82) L.A.
 673. -Sound and Fury II (BYO 83)
 674. ZERO BOYS-Vicious Circle (Nimrod 82) Indianapolis
 675. ZOUNDS-The Curse of Zounds (Rough Trade UK 82)
 676. VARIOUS ARTISTS-American Youth Report (Invasion 82) L.A.
 677. -Beach Blvd. (Posh Boy 80) L.A.
 678. -Beyond The Wildwood; Tribute to S. Barrett (Imaginary UK 88) Eng.
 679. -Busted at Oz live (Autumn 81) Chicago
 680. -Decline of The Western Civilization live (Slash 81) L.A.
 681. -Fast and Bulbous; Tribute to Beefheart (Imaginary UK 88) Eng.
 682. -Live at The Hope and Anchor (double LP, Harvest UK 78) Eng.
 683. -Live at The Roxy 77 (EMI UK 77) Eng.
 684. -New York Thrash (cassette only, ROIR Cassettes 82) N.Y.
 685. -Radio Tokyo Tapes (Ear Movie 83) L.A.
 686. -Rat Music For Rat People Vol. I live (CD Presents 82) Cal + N.Y.
 687. -Rodney on the RQ Vol I (Posh Boy 80)
 688. -Rodney on the RQ Vol II (Posh Boy 81)
 689. -Shangri-La Tribute to The Kinks (Imaginary/Skyclad 89)
 690. -Some Got Their Head Kicked In (BYO 83) L.A.
 691. -Something To Believe In (BYO 84)
 692. -Streets (Beggars Banquet UK 77) Eng.
 693. -Time Between; Tribute to The Byrds (Imaginary/Skyclad 89)
 694. -To The Shores of Lake Placid (Zoo UK 82) Liverpool
 695. -Tooth and Nail (Upsetter 79) L.A./S.F.
 696. -Trap Sampler (Trap 81) Portland, ORE
 697. -Vancouver Complication (Pinned CAN 79) Vancouver, CAN
 698. -Warfrat Tales (Warfrat 82) L.A.
 699. -What is it? (What? 82) L.A.
 700. -Yes L.A. (one sided, Dangerhouse 79) L.A.

THE 50 BEST ALBUMS, RECORDED AND RELEASED 1975-1989

- ADVERTS-Crossing The Red Sea With The Adverts (Anchor UK 78) London
- AVENGERS-Avengers (CD Presents 83) S.F.
- AZTEC CAMERA-High Land Hard Rain (Sire 83) Scotland
- BAD BRAINS-ROIR Cassette (ROIR Cassettes, 81) N.Y.
- BUZZCOCKS-A Different Kind of Tension (I.R.S. 79) Manchester
- Singles Going Steady (singles LP, I.R.S. 79)
- CHAMELEONS-Script of The Bridge (import version, Statiuk UK 83) Manchester
- What Does Anything Mean Basically (Statiuk UK 85)
- Strange Times (double LP version, Geffen 86)
- CLASH-The Clash (import version, CBS UK 77) London
- Give 'Em Enough Rope (CBS 78)
- COMSAT ANGELS-Waiting For a Miracle (Polydor UK 80) Sheffield, UK
- Sleep No More (Polydor UK 81)
- Fiction (Polydor UK 82)
- DAMNED-Damned Damned Damned (Stiff UK 77) London
- Strawberries (Bronze UK 82)
- ECHO AND THE BURGUNDY-Crocodiles (Sire 80) Liverpool
- Heaven Up Here (Sire 81)
- Porcupine (Sire 82)
- FOR AGAINST-December (Independent Projects/Chameleon 88) Lincoln, NE
- HEARTBREAKERS-Live at Max's Kansas City (Max's Kansas City 79) N.Y.
- LEAVING TRAINS-Kill Tunes (EST 86) L.A.
- LIBERTINES-Ohio (cassette only, Day One 87) Cincinnati, OH
- Tilt-a-Whirl (Megadisc, HOLLAND 89)
- LUCY SHOW-Undone (A&M 85) London
- RAMONES-Ramones (Sire 76) N.Y.
- R.E.M.-Murmur (I.R.S. 83) Athens, GA
- Green (WEA 88)
- RUTS-THE CRACK (Virgin 79) London
- Grin and Bear It (collection, Virgin UK 80)
- RUTS D.C.-Animal Now (Virgin UK 81)
- Saints-Eternally Yours (Sire 78) Australia
- A Little Madness to Be Free (New Rose FRANCE 84)
- All Fool's Day (TVT 86)
- SEX PISTOLS-Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols (WEA 77) London
- SIMPLE MINDS-New Gold Dream (A&M 82) Glasgow, Scotland
- SMITHS-The Queen is Dead (Sire 86) Manchester
- Strangeways Here We Come (Sire 87)
- (MORRISSEY)-Viva Hate (Sire 88)
- SOUND-Heads and Hearts (Statiuk UK 85) London
- Thunder Up (Netwerk CAN 87)
- STIFF LITTLE FINGERS-Inflammable Material (Rough Trade 79) Belfast, IRE
- Now Then... (Chrysalis UK 82)
- STONE ROSES-Stone Roses (Silvertone/RCA 89) Manchester
- T.S.O.L.-Beneath The Shadows (Alternative Tentacles 82) L.A.
- U2-Boy (Island 80) Dublin, IRE
- UNDERTONES-Undertones (Sire 79) Derry, IRE
- WIPERS-Youth of America (Park 81) Portland, ORE
- WIRE-154 (WEA 79) London
- XTC-Skylarking (Geffen 86) Eng.

THE NEXT 50 BEST ALBUMS, (#51-100) RECORDED AND RELEASED 1975-1989

- AGENT ORANGE-Living in Darkness (Posh Boy 81) L.A.
- BAD BRAINS-Rock For Light (PVC 83) N.Y.
- BAD RELIGION-Back to the Known (Epitaph 84) L.A.
- BUZZCOCKS-Another Music in a Different Kitchen (United Artists UK 78) Manchester
- CAPTAIN SENSIBLE-The Power of Love (A&M UK 82) London
- DEAD KENNEDYS-Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables (I.R.S. 80) S.F.
- Frankenchrist (Alternative Tentacles 85)

- D.O.A.-Hardcore '81 (Friends CAN 81) Vancouver, CAN
- EFFIGIES-Fly on a Wire (Ruthless/Fever 85) Chicago
- Ink (Ruthless/Fever 86)
- GANG OF FOUR-Entertainment (EMI 79) Eng.
- GAS-From The Cradle to The Grave (Good Vibrations UK 83) London
- GENERATION X-Generation X (import version, Chrysalis UK 78)
- HEARTBREAKERS-L.A.M.F. (Track UK 77) N.Y.
- JOY DIVISION-Unknown Pleasures (Factory 79) Manchester
- KILLING JOKE-Killing Joke (Editions EG 80) Eng.
- L.A.S.-L.A. Explosion (Bomp 79) L.A.
- Look Again (never released 2nd LP bootleg, 80)
- LUCY SHOW-Mania (Big Time 86) London
- MAGAZINE-Secondhand Daylight (Virgin 79) Manchester
- MINOR THREAT-Out of Step (Dischord 83) D.C.
- MISSION OF BURMA-Mission of Burma EP (Taang: 87) Boston
- NAKED RAYGUN-All Rise (Homestead 86) Chicago
- NEWTOWN NEUROTICS-Beggars Can Be Choosers (Razor UK 83) Eng.
- (NEUROTIICS)-Is Your Washroom Breeding Bolsheviks? (Jungle UK 88)
- NEW MODEL ARMY-The Ghost of Cain (Capitol/EMI 86)
- NILS-Nil EP (cassette only, Nils CAN 83) Montreal, CAN
- IGGY POP-New Values (Arista 79) N.Y.
- PUBLIC IMAGE LTD.-Metal Box (or "2nd Edition," Island 80) London
- REPLACEMENTS-Replacements Stink (Twin/Tone 82) Minneapolis
- REZILLOS-Can't Stand The Rezillos (Sire 78) Scotland
- SALEM 66-Salem 66 EP (Homestead 84) Boston
- SIMPLE MINDS-Song and Fascination (double LP version, Virgin UK 81) Scotland
- SIOUXIE AND THE BANSHEES-Once Upon a Time (singles LP, PVC 81) London
- SOCIAL DISTORTION-Mommy's Little Monster (13th Floor 83) L.A.
- _SOUND-From The Lion's Mouth (Korova/WEA UK 81) London
- STRANGLERS-Aural Sculpture (CBS 84) London
- SUBHUMAN-S-Incorrect Thoughts (Friends CAN 80) Vancouver, CAN
- TEARDROP EXPLODES-Kilimanjaro (Mercury 80) Liverpool
- TOXIC SUBSTANCES-Within These Walls (Rough Trade 85) S.F.
- U.K. SUBS-Endangered Species (Nems UK 82) London
- UNDERTONES-Hypnotized (Sire 80) Derry, IRE
- WEIRDOS-Who What Where Why EP (Bomp 79) L.A.
- WIRE-Pink Flag (Harvest 77) London
- X-RAY-Gem Free Adolescents (EMI UK 78) London
- XTC-Black Sea (Virgin 80) Eng.
- VARIOUS ARTISTS-New York Thrash (cassette only, ROIR cassettes 82) N.Y.
- Rat Music For Rat People live (CD Presents 82) S.F./L.A./N.Y.
- VANCOUVER COMPILATION (Pinned CAN 79) Vancouver, CAN
- Warfrat Tales (Warfrat 82) L.A.

LIVE! LIVE!

IAN MCCULLOCH (and THE PRODIGAL SONS) (from Liverpool, UK, Ritz 3/23/90, Theater of the Living Arts, Philadelphia, PA 3/25/90, Living Room, Providence, RI 3/26/90 Let's dispense with the Ritz show. Not that it was bad, it was quite good, but it just couldn't come close to the utter THRILLS Mac's old band produced on New York stages as recently as just 2 years ago. Though Mac was strong throughout, and well received, the sound was muddy. Lastly, Mac did 4 encores, of which only the first two were legitimately called for. Half the crowd had already exited when Ian + band walked out with 3/5 of THE SUGARCUBES to warble an atrociously drunken "Sweet Jane" entirely marred by EINER's horrific substitute for singing (where's BJORK when you need her?). Comical yes, but a shambles. 4th encore was a lovely "Killing Moon" but only 1/4 of the crowd was left. Ah well, Philadelphia was much, much better, and Providence was electrifying! It seems with this new, unpolished, young garage band Mac has assembled (as opposed to the super-group veteran touring bands many solo artists put out), the smaller and more personal the venue, the better they sounded. The whole solo LP Candleland (save for the new 45 "Faith and Healing" and "Start Again," both of which weren't played) was given more vigor, starting right off with the opening



IAN MCCULLOCH (and The Prodigal Sons) at The Living Room, Providence, RI, March 26, 1990.

"Flickering Wall" into "The White Hotel." Having pitched in with his best stuff from the start, Ian kept it going with his two best b-sides to date, the appropriately soaring "Rocket Ship" and the dirty "Toad." We also got 2 other Bunnymen numbers, one excellent ("Rescue," which restored the ending cut off by recent live Bunnymen versions), the other far inferior, a version of "The Cutter" that sorely missed his old mates. 3 new songs also sounded delectable: "I'm one" (I think) was as pretty as the LP cuts only with more balls; "Dead Sexy" or "Honeydrip" (not sure) was indeed sulkingly lustful ("drip your innocence/Cause I'm feeling guilty tonight"), and best of all, the incensed "Damnation" or "Damned Nation" (who's got a set list?) was a violent set ender to match the Bunnymen ending "Crocodiles." Could this be Mac's comment on the poll tax? Of course, Mac himself displayed all his tricks, cigarette hanging crooning, scarecrow dances (girls scream), deep low voices smoky singing, upper register bawling, and head-shaking, finger illustrating emotive gestures, some lewd. The man's among the best, if not the best and he knows it. Too bad he doesn't play guitar though! I miss that! If not the Bunnymen, there's still plenty to be carried away by. Wonder if "The Bunnymen" (minus Mac and Pete) can approach these altitudes?

THE CHILLS (from New Zealand, Cats Cradle, Chapel Hill, N.C. 4/14/90, Woodies 4/17/90) Best we've seen 'em. With a set that mixed in most of the new Submarine Bells with the old 45s and selected cuts from Brave Words, The Chills have some top flight material to match a much improved (already good) live prowess. They'd impressed enough at CBGB, but now they're tighter, more confident, and more intense! Singer/guitarist MARTIN PHILLIPS arches his neck, his head moving so much he sings into different parts of the mike each second, side to side. When his face is typically untroubled, he resembles Colin Newman, but put him on stage and his eyes widen, his cheeks redden like a pursued prey, and he lifts his whole frame into his singing as if trying to summon some extra verve from the lower parts of his body. This from someone with a shy, humble and placid (yet friendly) personality between songs! The many moods of the music makes for a well rounded experience; Much of the set is roller-coaster; "Oncoming Day," "Familiarity Breeds Contempt," & "Look For The Good in Others," faster

than their recorded cousins, come by with such punk briskness from such an otherwise "pop" group it's like invasion of the ants! That 19 year old drummer JIMMY STEPHENSON (he was not even 10 when Chills formed!) hits so hard he gives the illusion of out of control abandon. "I Love My Leather Jacket" takes on a heavy swagger, while others like the sweet, gentle "Submarine Bells" and "The Great Escape" are the joys of stillness, as intimate as good club gigs like these should be. The in-between stuff is their usual gems, and this excels the most, the beautiful choruses of "Wet Blanket" (how many times have you looked at a someone you badly desired and thought "You're so so so beautiful/Why aren't you mine?"), "Doldrums" and the high point of the North Carolina sets, the twin peaks of "House With a Hundred Rooms" into that stunning almost supernatural wonder "Pink Frost," with a keyboard (ANDREW TODD) melting-into-guitar part that never fails to amaze, and their most tormenting bass line (JUSTIN HARWOOD). Even that light fluff "Heavenly Pop Hit" seems sublime live. Since Woodies was 2 sets, they even debuted three fast, primal new ones in the 2nd set, along with quite a few old ones that weren't a part of the regular set, one of which, "Rolling Moon," Stephenson even lost the beat momentarily 'cause they practice it so infrequently. The crowds went wild for Chills at Woodies, they've crossed over into the category "truly great," the patience of Phillips' decade long labor really paying off. Well earned adulation for a special treat as modern pop bands go!

(photo: Jack Rabid)

LORD JOHN (from New Brunswick, NJ, Court Tavern, New Brunswick, NJ 12/1/89) Lord John reunited after a few years absence and played this one gig. Their differences returned almost immediately with disagreements galore, so before this show was even begun they were warning their supporters not to expect another! Talk about unstable! Felt pretty fortunate to have made it down if this is the case, and months later, there has still been no follow-up show! They come, they go, when they'll play again (if ever) nobody knows. It's such a shame, this band is excellent, perhaps the finest solely 60's inspired outfit the Northeast has produced. They were even more impressive in that with one or two exceptions like a sparkling "Turn Upside Down" the set ignored their only LP released 4 years ago on

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LORD JOHN AT THE COURT TAVERN, NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ, DECEMBER 1, 1989. THEY CAME OUT OF HIDING ONLY TO DISAPPEAR AS SUDDENLY! (photo: Jack Rabid)



Bomp Records, and instead dwelt on some even better as-yet unrecorded material. The guitars from tall man **RAY NORMANDY** were immense, sweeping psychedelic clusters matching the straight rhythm guitar of singer **TOM GIBSON**, and the deft drumming of **JOHN FIGLER**. No 60's fashion pretensions, no berets, no beatnick talk, no love beads, and no vox guitars, this was a modern band with a mind that looked back alright, but made sounds with 80's technology, an attack and directness that acknowledged the strides of punk and post-punk, and 80's nonchalance. It was easy to forget it was just a Jersey band in a small Jersey bar room basement, they filled the room with such resplendent, transcendental waves of sound and melody. The 50-100 people in comfy Court Tavern responded enthusiastically, but these guys are too picky, insisting to a man they'd played horribly, when all evidence was contrary. Normandy in particular seemed embarrassed about having to finish the last song or two with a broken string as if that somehow made them unlistenable. Maybe they're self-disgust was what made them good. But it seems they're quitting before they start again, too bad! How can we convince them to keep playing?

PSYCHEDELIC FURS from London, CBGB 1/17/90 & 1/19/90)

Psychedelic Furs were selling out Radio City Music Hall (6000) a few years ago, but now that they're back to the old sound, and out of that namby-pamby dance rock period, they content themselves with a Beacon Theater gig in December and 5 consecutive nights at little CBGB in January. As expected, all five nights sold out quickly and were sardine city. The set was all first two and current album numbers, opening up with a caustic "Dumbwaiters" as if the last 6 years never happened! Every interview they do they admit those records (in particular the innocuous Midnight to Midnight) were second-rate efforts, and that getting old drummer **VINCE ELY** back in the band has given them a shot in the arm much like Terry Chimes' re-entry in the Clash in '83, but still, who'd have thought they'd (like the Comsat Angels before them) disown those records completely!? Not a single track from Midnight surfaced, and only two from Mirror Moves, the OK tracks "Heaven" and an unusually vicious "Highwire Days" that blew away the recorded Keith Forsey gloss. **Furs** are not a great visual band: **RICHARD BUTLER** is appealing, but a smoother product than the neo-Johnny Rotten in a Japanese robe bent over and banging his foot he was at Irving Plaza in '80. He doesn't move as much as glide. His brother **TIM** works hard and is the most intent, but never comes out behind his shades. The guitarists, especially **JON ASHTON** are probably afraid they'd melt in the CBGB heat if they moved from the spots they stood at, although with the mountains of equipment they brought in (what is this, the Garden?) they didn't have much room anyway. No, the enjoyment of the Furs won't come through the eye sockets, one might as well close 'em, it's the aural assault. Butler's accented nasal coolness still fits well over the riffs (though the guitar sound is much more processed than in days of old), and the material was all bona fide hits like the blistering 2nd encore "Into You Like a Train" (which threatened and menaced as all show-stoppers should), "Love My Way," "Sleep Comes Down," "Sister Europe," and a dripping hot set-ending "House." Best of all, "Pretty in Pink" was done with only acoustic backing, completely redefining a great single grown tiresome from over-exposure. If they don't exactly knock themselves out up there, they're careful about their sound and their execution, and that made the cramped crowds and heat worth tolerating. Always interesting to see bands this big play places so small! More!

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RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY (from Leeds, UK, Live Tonight, Hoboken, NJ 3/19/90, Woodies 4/7/90: Was surprised to find that lead guitarist **WOLFIE** had split the band after 8 years, making guitarist/singer **CHRIS REED** the only remaining original member. Wolfie's pile driving riffs offset by his squeals of feedback (think "Chance," which Lorries didn't play this tour) and his heavy set, big presence would certainly be missed (we hear he's been joining the appalling Mission on stage for their U.K. gigs, on invitation from the drummer who was also an original Lorry). In fact, the first half of the Lorries' sets they were playing as a very unlikely and uncomfortable trio; presumably, Wolfie's replacement **GARY WEIGHT** is still in the process of learning a whole set's worth of material. Without a colorman, The Lorries' material is missing a lot, their material relies too heavily on the sweep of those lead guitar parts to really cut it as a stripped down trio, although they were passable. Fortunately, they heated up as expected during the 2nd half as a quartet. Early singles like "Monkey's on Juice" and "Take it All" mixed with the set closing "Shout at the Sky" and new album numbers to weave that old imposing, foreboding, blood curdling web of darkness, paranoia and resentment. Chris Reed is a nothing-fancy frontman, a serious, no-nonsense hard worker who is as stern as a hardhat ripping up the sidewalk. In sharp contrast, bassist **MARTIN SCOTT** and drummer **CHILL** (back in action after a broken arm postponed a UK tour) look like they're having a fun time! Radically different songs like the clangling "Nothing Wrong," the heavy "Talk About the weather" and the hulking "Shine a Light" elicit the same unyielding expression from him, he'll never allow Lorries to be light, fun entertainment, good for him! Woodies show was so-so but Live Tonight was killer in places, as persistent and pounding, rhythmic, and methodical as all their great gigs here in the past. Good to see some old veterans stick to their guns without interruption from the lineup changes, the prevailing fashions, and of course, "the weather."

STRAIGHTJACKET FITS (from New Zealand, Maxwells 11/2/89, Knitting Factory 11/3/89) Had a really good feeling about this band from seeing them live. Like the rest of their Flying Nun labelmates, they too can excel in precious pop, but unlike the Bats say, there was no possibility of a lull in their set with such belligerent material as "Hail" and

PSYCHEDELIC FURS AT A PACKED CBGB, JANUARY 19, 1990. NOTE RICHARD BUTLER WITH HAND EXTENDED SKYWARD. HIS BROTHER TIM (BASS) ON RIGHT, GUITARIST JON ASHTON ON LEFT. (photo: Jack Rabid)



"Life in One Chord" to knock the audience for a loop. Their physical appearance matched the dichotomy of their sound; they're rugged and imposing specimens, yet they seem instantly personable, and looked neither bored nor grandstandingly emotional. What they did was let their songs do the talking, and with such a fine variety of great songs that was wise. Much of the set (more or less the same both nights) was the sweet, spacious, gracious, swoon stuff, and the harmonies floated calmly and attractively. The harder stuff thus had a double-shock value; when they pulled out "Hail" at the end, it seemed as pulverizing as if it were hardcore or speedmetal, like mistaking a modest fastball for Nolan Ryan 'cause you've been given nothing but slow curve balls all game. Neither show was exactly sold-out, sorry to say; in fact much of the Maxwells crowd had come for Blue Aeroplanes and had sadly already departed, they saw a really good band but missed a far better one. It's always this way, isn't it?

SUNRISE HAMMERS (from N.Y., at Gas Station 2/10/90, Maxwells 4/6/90: Last issue we reviewed their first gig as "TIM SOMMER and BARBARA GOGAN," and indeed the pair have since picked up both a drummer and a name. The drummer is an excellent addition, in that he doesn't disturb but rather embellishes the light touches that first gig had established, with Sommer's basslines from his last band **HUGO LARGO** hitting the repetitive patterned playing of Gogan's guitar from her last band, England's **THE PASSIONS**. Gogan's voice slides gracefully from warm tones to her more biting whoops when singing lines like "I'll get you back." Driving herself into a trance like state of performing during songs (as if in the midst of a battle within), she becomes assured and congenial in the calm moments between the calm songs. Mostly it's the material on display, and at the moment they're doing mostly Gogan's songs, including the two best Passions' numbers, the last single "Sanctuary" and their only top 30 UK 45 "I'm in Love With a German Film Star," both of which glow in the dark clubs. Here's hoping they can get some records out.



SUNRISE HAMMERS' BARBARA GOGAN & TIM SOMMER AT GAS STATION, APRIL 6, 1990 (photo: Jack Rabid)

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LOS ANGELES! LOS ANGELES! los angeles! L.A.! + S.F.!

DICKIES at Bogarts, Long Beach, CA 12/22/89: There have been many Dickies shows over the years that have been memorable. There's been one or two mediocre ones, one or two outstanding ones. This was one of the best, perhaps the best since the gigs by the original lineup with 999 twelve years ago. Singer **LEONARD GRAVES** was late as usual, keeping us all waiting an hour past scheduled set time, but was instantly forgiven when he emerged at last on the stage. "Hmmm, let's see..." he mused. "The Sex Pistols are gone....The Clash are gone...The Avengers are gone....I guess we're the last punk rock Gods left!" Hilarious! With that, the band launched into their goofy fast cover of "Silent Night" (this is 3 days 'fore X-mas) and Graves pulled out a big Santa sack filled with fake snow, which he showered the audience, himself, his bandmates, and anyone within reach of. Suddenly everything was white, amps, drums, stage, waiters, what a giant mess! And song after song came breaking out of the band's hands, a wallop of joyful sound and Graves' hysterical antics. Perhaps the reason their act never gets stale is the music is so damn hot, **STAN LEE** looks more lost with every year, but the man handles a guitar like it's a kielbasa sausage, and **LAURIE** on bass in leopard tights is a great bassist too. The 2nd Coming material mixed well with the older hits (they didn't forget any, rest assured), with "Booby Trap" being the best new zinger. One unrecorded song was also played, "Toxic Avenger," which in beat and sound resembled D.O.A.'s version of "Bloodsucker Baby" or "No Class" Motorhead, you know. This show was such an immense, exciting blowout, it just can't be described accurately! You'd never know it occurred in just a typical bat in a suburban shopping mall near the beach! **BAD RELIGION** at The Country Club, Reseda, 12/23/89: Over 1000 punks crammed into the spacious but entirely too hot valley hall, infamous for its inadequate, muddy P.A. Not the ideal conditions to see this group, who rely so much on their miraculous singer **GREG GRAFFIN** to make sense of the big blur (since drummer **PETE FINESTONE** plays the songs even faster than on record!) of sound. In a big room like this, without that necessary clear sound, one had to wait for those vocals to come in before one could tell which song it was, they all sounded alike in the cacophony, and even

BAD RELIGION AT THE COUNTRY CLUB, RESEDA, CA, DECEMBER 23, 1989. LOOKS LIKE A HUGE L.A. HARDCORE GIG, DOESN'T IT? (photo: Jack Rabid)



then, the vocals being only sufficiently audible, it was still sometimes hard. Worse, Bad Religion were beset by equipment problems, and had to resort to borrowing a bass from one of the younger opening bands. When bassist JAY started playing the replacement, it sounded way out of tune, to the point that guitarist BRETT and Graffin were staring noticeably at him while he played. Disorder reigned in front of the group as the masses of L.A. teens flung themselves into each other, a sight I've witnessed countless times yet never have gotten used to. The whole thing was surreal, as if these people were a water moat separating those who were sitting or standing paying close attention to the group playing and the band, which took no notice despite the engulfing heat. Bad Religion's shows on the East Coast in '88 were far more exciting, though it wasn't entirely their fault. The whole live hardcore scene either profits or is sunk by the frenetic energy involved on the part of band and slammers. This one tried, but couldn't stay afloat. ■ **BLACKBIRD** at Raji's, Hollywood, CA 12/23/89: Same night as Bad Religion, 20 miles away back in Hollywood, but spiritually a billion light years away. Only 50 people are so down at the ex-Indian restaurant, comfy Hollywood Blvd. hangout with the mysterious lighting and do-it-yourself be comfortable outlook. (Example: the bar was really long, yet all they sold was cans of Bud in a trash can full of ice) Everything seemed twice as calm after that turmoil in the valley, everyone was just there to yap and enjoy the show, and what a show. Blackbird have now been around 2 years, and their sound is finally fully developed between the two KINMAN brothers, CHIP on guitar and TONY on bass (formerly of late 70's punks THE DILS and early 80's country rockers RANK AND FILE). Chip has picked up a guitar processor since last I saw them a year ago, and it has so radically rejuvenated their sound it isn't funny! He was blowing me away with that thing, he had a pretty sinister sound to begin with. The deluge of sound that came forth from his innocent looking amp was astonishing, a searing, bent, warped, demented pattern that suggested everything at once. Tony, tall and stoic as ever, stamped around, flicked at his bass with his big hands and sang determinedly into the mike without putting on a show. His workmanlike approach works 'cause he's so intent about it. All the best songs from both albums came out sounding ten times as maniacal what with Chip's new sound, especially "Quicksand" which was like a magic carpet ride it was so good. Not only did

their cover of VELVET UNDERGROUND's "What Goes On" seem like a one-chord destruction, but they also rang out a distorted version of LITTLE RICHARD's "Lucille," which owed more to the later rendition of THE EVERLY BROTHERS (whose version had already been copied by THE HOLLIES) than the original, plausible since 25 years later The Everly Brothers themselves covered a Rank and File song "Amanda Ruth" that itself was R&F mimicking the Everly Brothers! Got that? Then to top it all off, they gave us a contorted idea of that great 60's KINKS' b-side "I Need You," man this was heaven. What a great gig! It's like a whole different band, hard to believe it's just two brothers and a drum machine. ■ **STEPHANIE SHAYNE & 13 FRIGHTENED GIRLS** at Cafe Largo, Hollywood, CA 12/27/89: Folk night out, with each act separate and then both together. Shayne is more conventional, but her sullen tones have a sharp edge to them, and her songs are well developed. **SUMISHTA BRAHM**, who is 13 Frightened Girls, has a lighter, more cooing siren like voice. Both seem particularly concerned with politics and socio-politics underscored by Brahm's tribute to 30's activist/musician "PAUL ROBESON." Both good. as usual, Brahm's longtime position as a staff member of this mag precludes me from saying more. ■ **ARTHUR LEE & LOVE/PANDORAS** at Coconut Teaser, Hollywood, CA 12/28/89: Pandoras were some kind of nightmare, they've graduated from 3rd rate 60's revival to 3rd rate Runaways like hard rock. Yeech! Fine if you like this sort of stuff I guess. Not me! Arthur Lee is someone to look forward to seeing, one of the great eccentric talents of the 60's, and his Love are one of the most influential bands on today's young groups. Lee is the only one left from the quintet that made all those classic albums, but lots of people do that, that doesn't bother us. What bothers us is that his current drummer has unexpectedly neglected to attend tonight's performance, guaranteed to put a blight on just about any gig! What to do? The situation is not helped by Lee himself taking mushrooms before the show (I overheard a roadie say). Rather than cancel, in the "show must go on" spirit, the clubowner is called in to set up his kit, and here they are at last. Oh thrill! But something's wrong immediately. This drummer seems proficient and keeps a more than acceptable beat, but it becomes unmistakable that he doesn't know at all how either "7 & 7 Is" or "Signed D.C." go, which were the first two songs attempted. And let's face it, if he doesn't know the band's two best known hits, he isn't likely

(both photos: Jack Rabid)

BLACKBIRD, BROTHERS TONY (L) AND CHIP KINMAN AT RAJI'S, HOLLYWOOD, CA, DECEMBER 23, 1989



SUMISHTA BRAHM (L) AND **STEPHANIE SHAYNE** AT CAFE LARGO, HOLLYWOOD, CA, DECEMBER 27, 1989





ARTHUR LEE OF ARTHUR LEE AND LOVE SEEKS HUMOR
AMIDST THE CONFUSION, AT THE COCONUT TEASER,
HOLLYWOOD, CA, DECEMBER 28, 1989. NO ONE
DEMANDED A REFUND! (photo: awed Jack Rabid)

to know their other material either! Lee is not the sort of simple songwriter, with straight verse-chorus bits any drummer could fake merely by just keeping a straight time (like Ty Styx when he played with Heartbreakers at Max's). 5 minutes in and the show's already a calamity. Lee has been mumbling and stumbling since he first walked on and pleaded into the mike to turn off the JIMI HENDRIX tape that was playing in the club, which someone must have thought he'd enjoy hearing since he played with Jimi in the 60's. Mostly, the stoned Lee warbled on about nothing, about how he has nightmares about gigs like these that are such a mortifying experience. He'd do 5 minute monologues with the crowd who was yelling out suggestions, advice, encouragement, requests and jokes at the poor fellow. No matter how godawful this was, the crowd were all understanding Lee disciples who were well versed in Lee's unpredictable reputation. No one had come demanding anything in particular, and on this night, they weren't going to get anything anyway! After one blues jam, a countryish tune, some more aborted attempts at Love songs (Lee even played the difficult intro to "Alone Again Or" when it was requested, but you could forget the drummer feigning that one!), finally he just said sorry and vacated the stage. So we got like 4 or 5 songs, all badly performed despite the best efforts of what looked like an otherwise hot backing group (including an ex-KNACK guitarist) in a half hour's time. The only reason no one asked for a refund is that most of us just felt blessed to even be sharing a room with this guy! **NOTE:** Rich Katz saw Lee and Love three weeks later in S.F., drummer and all, and said he put on a great show! Some people have all the luck!

■(THE ORIGINAL) T.S.O.L. at Celebrity Theater, Anaheim, CA 12/29/90: Good time to be in L.A.! Particularly since this reunion lasted (as scheduled) just 2 shows, this one and one the following week. Exciting to think that for the first time in 7 years, we'd not only get to see that terrific older T.S.O.L. that brought us the two EPs and the first two albums, but that we'd get to hear them play those songs as well! Sure enough, 2-3000 people paid \$20 each for the privilege, this large theater in the round

(do they have boxing here?) was just filled with people, the majority of whom were not any where near old enough to have seen this lineup of JACK, RON, MIKE and TODD in the early 80's (strange since in L.A. T.S.O.L. typically drew these same giant crowds back then - what happened to all those people? Not interested now I guess! See Bad Religion interview for further discussion). At first, some bozo had the brilliant idea to rotate the stage, like Yes in the round at the Garden or something, so for the first song one got their fronts, their sides, their backs (what could be seen on the other side of the drums and amps), their other sides then their fronts again. If this wasn't making one seasick enough, the bizarre thing is that a very small number of kids were doing the usual slamming and stage diving, and they too had to rotate with the stage. Ever heard of a rotating pit? Some of them were getting left behind, since it isn't their penchant to be watching what's happening on the stage (!!!!!), now that was funny! The bouncers weren't used to these kind of shows, they were carting off stage divers right and left. Who needs 'em anyway? Fortunately, after that first song, the stage was kept stationary, infinitely preferable! T.S.O.L. played everything (almost) off the two EPs and first LP, plus only one Beneath The Shadows track "Wash Away," possibly since their keyboard player from that record GREG KUEHN was not with them, possibly because they hadn't bothered to rehearse at all for the show and knew older stuff better. Todd, Ron, and Jack didn't need to rehearse, they played their parts as flawlessly as if they were on tour! Good memories. Ron, of course, was one of the best guitarists in punk back then; the psychedelic element he introduced on that Beneath The Shadows album remains the most significant advance the 3rd wave of punk made, a progression that was immediately dropped when that LP was rejected by the narrow minded hardcore scene, and this lineup split soon thereafter. Tonight he mixes in those elements into the older stuff, it's stupendous! Todd is killer, a quick, sharp, perfect powerhouse. Mike, on the other hand, makes errors right and left, but is able to correct himself quickly in each case. The band sounded fast, loose, on target, and inspiring and energetic on songs we thought we'd never hear again like "Love Story" and the ending "Sounds of Laughter." Jack? Mr. ever-changing (in one gig) persona? Sure he was wild. With his make-up, his uni-sex fashions being stripped off one by one, and his constant exhortations to the audience to take all their clothes off, he's still the quintessential frontman, tall, lean and gliding around with that lop of his, handheld mike aloft, chanting out those lyrics in ever cool style. Jack doesn't care, he just likes to play with you. What a show! Too bad they're all in other bands now (though curiously enough, since Ron left 2 years ago, and Mike left because of drug problems recently, none of these 4 are in the current T.S.O.L. that continued on after this original lineup broke up in '83, and who have a new album out on Enigma! Weird how that worked out. Can you think of any other band that doesn't contain a single member from the original lineup that made two popular albums?) it would be great if they stayed together, though with 2 bands called T.S.O.L. simultaneously, that might be confusing! What a great stroke of luck to have been in L.A. this week, to have seen this show. Now if only The Weirdos would play while I'm there!



ANGRY SAMOANS' METAL MIKE AND GREGG TURNER AT 6TH ST. RENDEVOUS, SAN FRANCISCO, CA, NEW YEAR'S EVE, DEC. 31, 1989 (photo: Jack Rabid)

ANGRY SAMOANS at 6th Street Rendevous, San Francisco, CA, 12/31/89: New Year's Eve in San Fran! Sounds like fun. Nothing was happening in L.A. anyway, except, of course, Screaming Jay Hawkins at the Palamino, but I saw Screaming Jay at the Palamino the last two New Year's Eves, let's find something else to do, shall we? What a long drive by myself though, sheee. My Mom sends me off with a cooler full of apples and cheese and sandwiches and drinks, the works, thanks Ma, but, really, being alone in the car for 6 or 7 hours really wears you down. OK, so I'm tired, big deal! Haven't been to S.F. in 7 years, and besides, how often do Angry Samoans hit the East? The "club" isn't really a club at all, it's a bar with in a seedy neighborhood off Mission St. that is probably being used for a rock 'n' roll gig for the first and last time, the Oriental folks who run the place look a little befuddled at the punk and Bohemian garbed patrons for the evening, and this raucous music, but they're happy with the bar business, which is booming! Got there too late to see **KINGS OF OBLIVION**, but judging from their Detroit rockin' 45, this must have seemed like another earthquake to the people running the joint! Another group played whose name escapes me, then at last the Samoans walked on in time for midnight, which of course they counted down and made fun of. Then they whipped through some 20 songs so fast one couldn't be sure one had really heard them! In addition to all the older Samoan oldies like "Light's Out," a good 1/2 of the set was devoted to late 70's punk covers, like **PAGANS**, Vancouver **SUBHUMANS**, and **THE DAMNED**'s version of **THE BEATLES**' "Help." All were played so much faster than these old classics, they were trashed so bad they were almost unrecognizable, which was great fun, a chaotic blitzkreig. So much for the 80's, bring on the last of the 20th century already. Missed gigs: the night before, 12/30/89 went straight from a hockey game at the Forum (damn Flyers beat the Kings, but that's OK, they didn't end up making the playoffs anyway, ha ha!) to Al's Bar in downtown L.A. to see **WEDNESDAY WEEK** and **TROTSKY ICEPICK**. Something bad always happens to me at this place. Last time I went, I got thrown out at a Social Distortion show for being underage (20) after I'd successfully snuck in. Damn, nobody proofed in New York back then, that was a shock! Here it is years later, and I get there at 11 to find that Wednesday Week aren't playing after all (there was

a mix-up with the promoter who'd gone out of town), and Trotsky aren't going on 'til 1. I've got to get up early tomorrow to leave for S.F., and I don't know anyone in the place, so I just missed the show. In retrospect that was the wrong move, this was the last gig for Trotsky with this lineup and I heard they smoked! As for Wed. Week, who'd recently re-added former **LAST** guitarist **DAVID NOLTE** to the fold, their cancellation was doubly sad when the group announced four months later they'd split up. Damn! Sorry to see them go! R.I.P., I liked their records and gigs a lot! Another one bites the dust, always makes me sad. **Missed gig #2:** The night before I left, January 2, 1990, Went back to Hollywood, intending to see the 2nd (and last) show by the reunion of the original T.S.O.L. at Raji's. The gig was set up to record a live LP (hope this comes out), but the idea was a little crazy. First of all, what a band that sold 2-3000 tickets at \$20 a head is doing playing a tiny club that holds 100 people in Hollywood, I don't know. 2nd, the show is free! 3rd, not only is the show listed and picked by the critics in the L.A. Weekly, but Jack had mentioned it prominently from the stage of that last gig the week prior, even giving out his home phone number through the p.a. to the 2-3000 people (that guy is a nut!) so they could call him to get on the guest list! Not that one needs a guest list for a free show! But anyway, Holy crowds, Batman! I got there early to interview Jack and Ron at soundcheck (which Mike missed, pissing the other 3 off), then left for an hour or two to interview Bad Religion. When I returned, sure 'nuff, the lines were around the block, and it was obvious that only a small percentage could get in, and even then, these people would have to be crammed in so tight it would be like those old college stunts where 15 students would try to pack a phone booth or a VW bug. Again, having to get up early for a morning flight, and having seen the group play under more comfortable conditions just 5 days prior, it was decided to forego the "entertainment." Haven't heard any reports on how the show went! Sorry there were no gigs featuring **THE CREAMERS**, a new band many good people are touting. Hopefully next year. Wonder how Screaming Jay was this year? Always good to go out and visit the family for X-mas and see a lot of good shows. No better place to be in the winter! Thanks to the various people who also put me up.

I DON'T GO OUT MUCH ANYMORE (LIFE WITHOUT EARPLUGS):
BLUE AEROPLANES at Maxwells, 11/2/89: Good bill with these folks supporting Straightjacket Fits, but most of the audience seemed like record company people and record company invites (now that they're on a major). Nothing wrong with that, I suppose, except the crowd filed out immediately after the set and didn't stick around for the more needy and far better New Zealanders. Ah well, that's life. Aeroplanes were a bit of a rarity, in that they had 3 guitars (I haven't seen that on such a little stage since an awful Charlie Daniels like country band played a frat party at Lafayette College 10 years ago), a singer who didn't play anything, and if that wasn't crowded enough, they also had a dancer who did nothing but undulate the whole show! Fortunately, none of them moved much anyway or they would have knocked each other a lot. The singer was a really convincing frontman, obviously experienced (he looked like he really knew what he was doing) and very lively. His charisma and overall get up and go makes them a far superior live act than on record, really worth seeing.
BUZZCOCKS at Living Room, Providence, RI 11/7/89,

Ritz 11/10/89, Theater of The Living Arts, Philadelphia, PA 11/11/89, City Gardens, Trenton, NJ 11/12/89, 9:30 Club, Washington D.C. 11/13/89, Phantasy Theater, Cleveland, OH 11/16/89, St. Andrews Hall, Detroit, MI 11/17/89, Metro, Chicago, IL 11/18/89: Uhh, covered last issue. So I cheated! Did you really want to wait 7 more months to read about Buzzcocks live? I didn't! ■VERLAINES at Knitting Factory 11/9/89: I am not a Verlaines fan, but I'll check out anything on Flying Nun, it's a long way to come to play here! They were much better live than on record, much more power, though they're still a bit repetitive. Funny thing is, though, it's amazing how much they sound like The Jam live, particularly having seen both. A funny thought, and not a bad one. ■JOHN HALL and FULTON MALL at Lizard's Tail, Williamsburg, NY, 12/9/89: Two poet/comics, both very good. Fulton Mall was reviewed by Caroline last issue, and I concur with her observations. Fulton is a character created by the talented TOM KEENER, and his characterizations of the Irish, religion, and love affairs gone sour were always funny, highlighted by a particularly ridiculous Irish policeman imitation. Hall on the other hand, reads his pieces in ever rising tones until he's shouting himself into a frenzy, adding a physical element to his humor. A good 1-2 punch. ■SPRINGHOUSE at CBGB 12/16/89: CBGB forgot to list us in the ad, even though we were in the headline spot, but we played anyway and had a good time. Of course, though, most people didn't know we were playing! ■SPRINGHOUSE at CBGB 1/19/90: Opening for Psychedelic Furs, had to play acoustic 'cause the Furs gave their 20 odd opening acts (for their 5 night run) exactly 5 channels on the mixing board, you can't exactly mike a drum set that way! Most bands manage to play CBGB without hogging up the whole board, even much bigger bands like Living Colour, so this does not speak well for the Furs, but that was their choice. On our behalf I didn't mind, we were playing acoustic by choice the next night anyway, but I think that was a bad thing on their part to do anyway! So much for support bands! ■DAVID KEENER/NAKED STATUE/SPRINGHOUSE at Max Fish, 1/20/90: Three "acoustic" acts. David Keener on first was an earnest Billy Bragg/Elvis Costello type up there alone with his guitar singing heartfelt, clever, "these girls sure mess me up" type songs. His voice is a little on the reedy side, but his songs are excellent and often amusing (he's even got a song about former-Met Ray Knight), overall very enjoyable. Naked Statue was actually 2/3 of the group, as the drummer was in England, but it was significant nonetheless in that they'd split up, and now a few months later they've reformed, so it was nice to see them playing, and doing their great material like "Balloon" and "I'm Lost" again. Singer BEN VOSS gets better each time. Oddly enough, both Naked Statue and David Keener both covered "Folsom Prison Blues." Springhouse played our quietest set in history, the drummer even resorting to borrowed brushes and no cymbals or rack toms for the occasion. Personally, I liked the cover of THE HOLLIES' "Clown" (see For Certain Because, 1966, Stop Stop Stop in U.S.) the best 'cause the drummer sang it, but all bias aside, MITCH's version of former WIPERS leader GREG SAGE's "Soul's Tongue" (from Sage's excellent solo LP Straight Ahead, 1985) was the feature for me. ■DAVID KEENER at Chameleon, 1/26/90: Much the same as his set at Max Fish the week before, only he was joined for a few songs by the equally talented JAMES GRAHAM on 2nd guitar to do a few zinger leads, a nice spice. The thing to remember about this show, though, is that someone for some reason was

25 showing black and white movies on the screen at the back of the tiny stage, and while Keener was playing, they were showing BEATLES movies the whole time! I would have told 'em to turn the thing off, but one could do worse than Beatles movie, that's true! ■LEMONHEADS (from Boston) / MAGNOLIAS (from Mnpls.) at Maxwell's, 1/27/90: Two great bands in one night. Unfortunately, your humble reviewer was unusually (I think) very drunk, and remembers little except to say that both bands were excellent, especially Magnolias, who rate as one of the best live bands in America at present. I'm ashamed I haven't more to say! (whoops) ■FOOD FOR FEET/SPRINGHOUSE at Woodies 2/5/90: Food For Feet include a few former OINGO BOINGO people, and their music is a weird amalgamation of reggae, hard rock and heavy metal with some funk thrown in. Not in the least my taste, though the HENDRIX cover was good. Springhouse were OK, nothing special. ■NEW CREATURES at Under Acme 2/9/90: Local goth rock band, very dramatic, very dark, very influenced by this tradition, which isn't the sort of music I personally go for. If it's yours, you'd really like these guys, they were very well received. ■NIHILISTICS at CBGB 2/9/90: A far cry from New Creatures the same night! The return of those cultural terrorists Nihilistics was pretty hilarious. As in days of old, RON and MIKE spent most of the set berating the audience, raining down their contempt for them from start 'til end. Music was mostly uptempo '77 punk, except two exceptional songs that were in the Motorhead "No Class" swaggering mode. Just one or two old ones, neither of which sounded like the old band at all, a new time, a new band. ■RED TEMPLE SPIRITS (from L.A.) at Woodies 2/16/90: Last week it was N.Y. goths, today it's L.A. goths, though with a much different set of influences. For some reason, while watching this spectacle, the singer began to resemble Ian Astbury circa Southern Death Cult more each minute. Very showy, very strutting, but some neat tricks (throwing fake paint all over the place was especially clever, it looked pretty real, as if they'd just finished trashing RON WOOD's plush establishment, I bet the bouncers would have beaten the fuck out of them if it was real paint!). I give him credit for standing up there wearing nothing but a loin cloth that really didn't hide his testicles much (my my, aren't we brave), and it's funny to see a guy dressed like this with his arms straight to his sides as he sings (very Christlike). Really the main attraction of this band, the thing

THE NIHILISTICS MAKE A COMEBACK AT CBGB,
FEBRUARY 9, 1990. (photo: Jack Rabid)



that held the interest, was the guitar player DINO, who has a great sound and whose lines are fascinating. Since this music really isn't my cup of tea, he must have been great to keep me entertained! ■ **11TH DREAM DAY** (from Chicago) at Woodies 2/17/90: Back again the next night? Maybe I should have just fell asleep on one of the sofas they have around the dancefloor of the place. 11th Dream Day are the third band of this column so far that completely blows away their records (good engineers must be becoming a rarity), with a bodily bearing that keeps coming at you. Real muscular rock with its share of sonic overload, very impressive. ■ **HOPE** at CBGB 2/17/90: Same night, 3 blocks away. Their first gig in ages. The older pop/punk Hope was far preferable to this hard wank rock sound they've got now, but as hard rock guitar bands go, they're actually quite good, mostly because singer/guitarist JESSIE MALIN is a dynamic, exuberant frontman, and he's still a good songwriter. Bands are always changing, huh? ■ **THROWING MUSES** (from Boston) at Maxwells, 2/23/90: Sold out, crowded, hot. It's funny how that's no problem for your favorite bands, but when it's a band you just like a bit, it's suddenly a big nuisance! Watched from the back, and listened from outside the ladies room (always plenty of company there), didn't see much, so not much to say except they were every bit as good as their gig with REM at Nassau Coliseum, even though they were breaking in a new bass player since. ■ **GALAXIE 500/SPRINGHOUSE** at Maxwells 2/24/90: A friend of mine calls Galaxie 500 "Sominex 500" 'cause they put him to sleep. Perhaps that's a bit extreme, but there's no question they have little use for variety in their sound and songs, and since that one song/sound they keep playing is sloooooooooooooow and laaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaazy and meandering, wandering, rambling and stumbling, it's a shame they don't try to do more with it. With the exception of a little faster cover of NEW ORDER's "Ceremony," most of their stuff just wobbles along, occasionally falling flat like little Maggie in the Simpsons. In short doses they are far more interesting, with a dazed mantra-like haze of timeless space, a sensation of zero-gravity, of Velvet Underground like repetition and peculiar soprano croaking. Ah well, at least they're interesting, but the concentration wanders and the eyes do grow a bit heavy. As for Springhouse, this was our first opportunity to play for a sold out house, and it was an incredible thrill. This is the only live tape of us I listen to often, it was as good as we could play and we were all so excited we could barely sleep that night. ■ **SHAMS** at Rodeo Bar 2/28/90: Rodeo bar is a homey place, with log cabin like room where the bands play, no cover, and wild west atmosphere. Unfortunately, the drinks are not cheap, the Mexican food is typically overpriced, and the p.a. system is adequate but too quiet; despite the fact that only two acoustic guitars (or an acoustic guitar and an acoustic bass) were competing with them, the vocals could not be heard back by the bar where a lot of the people were standing, taking no notice of the act playing. Nevertheless, this was a fun show, and an OK place for as quiet and personal an act as the all-girl trio Shams, who have some of the loveliest voices of any country folk outfit around. Few harmonize as well as these three young women on such winsome material as the two sides of their single, very sweet stuff, especially "Only a Dream" which sounded exactly like the record. For comic relief, they played this one song in both sets that went something like "I've got the temporary not-even a secretary go and get some coffee file clerk blues." The

strange thing was that one girl was a foot taller than the other two, and she's the one who doesn't play an instrument, so she was stuck in the middle. When she was singing, she must not have known what to do with her free hand, 'cause she spent the whole of the two sets rubbing her stomach, legs and side with it. Very distracting! Oh well, a really good different night out, for those who like their country gentle. ■ **CHRIS STAMEY, FLIGHT OF MAVIS, SPRINGHOUSE** at J.C. Dobbs, Philadelphia, PA 3/3/90: Springhouse up first. We were OK I guess. Flight of Mavis has a solid local following in Philly, and put on another strong showing of their strumming jangly guitar pop with good vocals. A few of their songs still remind of "Gardening at Night" by R.E.M., but that's fine. Good band. I've never been a big fan of Stamey's but his group was well rehearsed and smooth, and their songs flow naturally like water down the driveway. The Byrds and Beatles covers were excellent (that's not so easy, you know, to walk in the steps of the best). Overall a lot better than expected, really pretty good. ■ **AMANDA KRAMER** at Quiet Life, Williamsburg, NY 3/17/90: Cool place, only \$5, inspired, eclectic jukebox, social atmosphere, cheap illegal bar, and acoustic only acts. Not many clubs in former funeral homes, the perfect setting for such hushed music! Of course, this was a low key, word of mouth place, not a real club licensed to do such business. Unfortunately, some photog from Village Voice was running around taking photos, and although the guy who runs the joint had elicited a promise from the accompanying Voice scribe not to mention the address in his article on the place, the story that ran 4 days later included a photo of the building, complete with the two street signs in front (gee, it will be real hard to find the place), and a photo of the illegal bar just to make sure the fire, liquor, and cabaret license authorities would have no trouble figuring out what was happening and where to put a stop to it. To top it all off, the Happy Land catastrophe occurred a week or two later, so the proprietor wisely shut down his friendly little illicit operation, what a shame! Enjoy 'em while they last, I guess. As for Kramer, the only thing wrong with her set was its length, she only played like half a dozen songs. It was very different than seeing her with full band at Knitting Factory some time ago, songs like "Love and War" sounded as beautiful yet even more lovely for their simple sparseness. Kramer has such a gorgeous voice, it's a pleasure to hear her sing, and despite the continuous applause there was no persuading her and her guitarist (straight from the Bob Mould tour, he replaced Chris Stamey) to come out and play, oh, a half-a-dozen more! Appealing show/night anyway. ■ **BIG WHEEL** (from Louisville, KY) at Pyramid, 3/22/90: Curious to see the new band with former SQUIRREL BAIT singer PETER SEARCY on vocals. It seems that all the spin-offs from this group bear no resemblance to the original, Big Wheel sound as little like Squirrel Bait as Bastro does! Not to be confused with JAKE BURNS' post SLF group, Big Wheel are a compound of different folk, punk, hard rock and metal styles, with Searcy's histrionic singing ascending over the clamor. His voice is thicker now that he's out of his teens, and some of its crude greatness has been lost, but he's still a major talent. However, only half the material is as worthwhile as the voice, so this was a yo-yo of alternatively stimulating and tiring ups and downs. They were good, but somehow more was wanted. Unreasonable expectations? ■ **COP SHOOT COP/OF CABBAGES AND KINGS/UNSANE** N.Y./SPRINGHOUSE at CBGB, 3/24/90: Springhouse on first. We were OK I guess. But

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a far different animal than the other groups on the bill, who are all noise/grunge merchants in the No New York through Sonic Youth to industrial clanging and banging tradition. Tried to watch, since curiosity is usually a good thing, but developed a headache that got progressively worse as the evening progressed. Of course, that's a risk of this sort of music, it's such scraping pandemonium, but as a result, can't really venture an informed, fair opinion. ■ ULTRA-VIVID SCENE at Theater of The Living Arts, Philadelphia, PA 3/25/90: Only arrived early enough to see Ian McCulloch's opening group at this show. Boy were they dull! Not their music, which is quietly shimmering, lush and placid, but them themselves. No enthusiasm, no expression like the vacant stares on the A-train after rush hour, no life, no desire, no attitude, no energy, no movement, no matter. A far cry from the headliner! Just another day at the office? Musicians are allowed to be precious about their music, but not to the point of suffocation. They're really good, but they're really bumps on a log. Oh well. ■ VIOLENT FEMMES/CHICKASAW MUD PUPPIES at Einstein-A-Go-Go, Jacksonville, Florida, 3/31/90:

What am I doing in Florida? I don't know, but I'm having a great time. Einsteins is one of the best clubs I've ever seen, particularly considering it resides in a place that isn't exactly the cultural center of the Eastern seaboard. Situated a block from the beach, it co-exists with unruly biker bars and pickup joints next door and across the street, which makes its peaceful yet festive (almost tropical) atmosphere indoors the more remarkable. The bar doesn't serve alcohol so all ages are admitted and the crowd was a nice mixture of ages, all of whom were talking up a storm. This club is made for socializing. The DJ music is good and unpredictable, everything from punk to reggae to rap without hipness or pretense, but even this is kept at a reasonable volume so one doesn't have to shout. Furthermore, a large room off to the



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side sports seats and benches to sit and converse, something our own clubs could sorely use considering the far later hours they subject us to! One can see the stage from back there too, if so desired. And if that ain't all, next to that room is a little store that sells records, CDs, tapes, posters, postcards, magazines, and do-dads of the sort of bands that regularly play there. Bands obviously like the place, since plenty of top rank underground acts come on a regular basis (if I stuck around, I could have seen Firehouse), bands that skip much bigger Southern towns. And with all this, it's a prime place to see a band! Oh yeah, we do that at clubs too, don't we? The stage comes out of the corner of the rectangular room, much like another a-Go-Go, the Whiskey a-Go-Go in L.A. This means that no matter where you stand you're a part of the show, and the band feels enwrapped by the audience. Chickasaw Mudpuppies were just 2 eccentric hobos playing a warped swamp blues the Cramps might like. One guy played a hard acoustic while the other sang and played a harmonica. The singer stamped out the time of each song with his foot, and a mike was placed on the floor to catch the sound, it was much like a throb of a bass drum only with more of a thud. Never saw this before! Pretty good, lots of animation on stage too, which lent them more of an attraction than their simple set up suggested. Violent Femmes came on as reigning heroes to a whooping reception 'causing a bunch of "we can do no wrong" smiles. I'm not, haven't been, and never will be a fan of theirs, but any one would have been happy for them to have earned such appreciation. In fact, when, 1/2 way through the set they did their "teen anthem" "Blister in the Sun," the band allowed the audience to loudly sing the whole first three verses and choruses, which the crowd did easily without getting a single word wrong. Then the Femmes joined in and they started over from the 1st verse! Amazing. The first song was so good, I was thinking it was time

to change my opinion of the group! I only heard it that once, but the words were so simple I picked 'em up: "I like her shoes, I like her dress, I'd like you more if you liked her less" (and two others with "her hat" matched with "I'd like you more if you dressed like that," and "her pants" matched with "I'd like you more if we started to dance"). Tremendous fun, with GORDON GANO's whiny voice making it seem like a statement for our times! From there they went back to their neo-rockabilly blues shuffle that's Ok but does little for me. Oh well, a great time anyway. ■ SPRINGHOUSE at The Beat, Port Chester, N.Y. 4/5/90: Two sets, some 25 songs, wow was I tired. Best thing was a friend of ours, MIKE ACKERMAN joined us on stage for a silly, fast, almost-Dickies version of "Please Please Me," so I got to go out in the crowd and hear what the band sounded like for the first time. What a luxury. Drummers can't even do that in sound check! Funny enough, I broke my snare in the middle of the first song of the first set, if a fellow from a local band hadn't driven home and gotten his to loan to me, that would have been a disaster! Thanks guy! I couldn't even buy him a drink, he works at the club! ■ SPRINGHOUSE, THREE HITS, and as yet un-named at a party, Raleigh, North Carolina 4/13/90: Two kegs and 100-150 people, at a big old house in a quiet section of downtown Raleigh was just too fun to believe. The two or three people who live there must be Stranglers fanatics, I counted 3 or 4 late 70's Stranglers songs coming out of the P.A. speakers in between bands. No cops, no neighborhood complaints, just peaceful and friendly like the southern stereotype that may be true after all from this trip! Nothing like this ever happens around here! Three Hits were making their debut with their new acoustic only lineup, which was notably different from their LP and singles. The singer SHEILA VALENTINE and guitarist MIKE KURTZ remain, but without drums (just congas now) it's a much lighter fare. Valentine is a good enough singer to pull this off, however, and the material was hardy, "Fire in the House" (an LP favorite) in particular. "As yet unnamed" featured ex-Three Hits guitarist, and Mike Kurtz's brother DANNY KURTZ on guitar and vocals. This was more of a slop-bucket rockin' garage outfit that would have comfortably fit in on a bill of current Australian or early 70's Detroit bands, an observation that became verified when they whipped out a couple of Stooges covers with some special guests from the audience like "TV Eye." This kind of heavy r'n'r never goes out of style, and someone will always be playing it! Springhouse were OK I guess. ■ CHILLS/BLAKE BABIES/SPRINGHOUSE at Cat's Cradle, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 4/14/90: Springhouse up first, one of our fortunately better sets since a hundred or two turned up early, and more people filed in as we played. Very exciting. Blake Babies are young, fresh-faced, naive ingenues with a happy-go-lucky attitude and an unpretentious pop sound. Their drummer FREDA doesn't even use tom toms and barely hits her skins at all as if afraid to break them, but she's got a solid time anyway and a sunny stage disposition. The bassist is good, and her vocals are improving though they still are too high pitched and squeaky for the sort of catchy stuff they write, it's too bad, she sure tries hard enough. Oddly enough, the guitarist only sings a handful of songs in a sheepish style that makes it seem as if someone's forcing him at gunpoint to do it at all, but he's got a great voice, and they sound immeasurably better on the songs he takes over. Weird! Good band at any case. Chills are reviewed elsewhere. ■ BLAKE BABIES at Woodies 4/17/90: Back in New York, they and the

Chills had to play 2 sets this time, so Blake Babies mixed up the material a bit, opening the first set with a few LUCINDA WILLIAMS songs and opening the second with a cover of "I am a Rock" that, though not up there with SIMON AND GARFUNKEL or the HOLLIES later version on '66's Would You Believe, was nevertheless good to hear. They did their cover of THE STOOGES' "Loose" from '70's Funhouse too, though it still seems strange to hear a female sing "I'll stick it deep inside." Uhmmm, you're not a hermaphrodite by any chance, are you? Otherwise, it seems kind of difficult to do. strap-ons? This is getting sick, sorry. But it does seem strange! ■ SPRINGHOUSE/OUR AMERICAN COUSINS at WFDU Benefit, Live Tonight, Hoboken, NJ 4/27: Poor WFDU! Competing with a hot Firehouse show 8 blocks north at Maxwells, few people turned up at this benefit, despite the 4 bands playing. Perhaps the \$8 charge without the benefit of a big name act hurt as well, who knows? A good 25-50 watched as Our American Cousins took the stage. Presumably named after the play Abraham Lincoln was watching at Ford's Theater when he was shot (next to 9:30 Club in D.C., maybe he should have gone to a Minor Threat all ages matinee instead), Our American Cousins remind first of all of the earlier punk days when more women and minorities seemed to pack the clubs and the bands themselves. The singer MIKE CONSTANT is African-American, the bassist MONICA is female, and the guitars and drums (J. SAINT & THE SWINGER) are white males. This info is not important, but it's nice to see anyway. The day we achieve a colorblind society with equal participation by women we'll all be a lot happier. Anyways, there's already a description of their sound in the review of their single elsewhere in these pages, and live they sounded much like that record. The funny thing though, was this crazy medley they ended their set with, mixing in a whole bunch of covers that all have the same chords, like THE RAMONES' "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend" into THE CARS' "My Best Friend's Girl." They could do without changing the Ramones' lyric of "sweet little girl" into "sweet little bitch" and the additional "new" references to fellatio that aren't in the original, it's not really funny and it's pretty stupid, but overall they were good. Springhouse were not so good, but not all gigs will be your best. Missed ASTRONAUTS and recent Texas Hotel Records' signing BABY FLAMEHEAD from Philadelphia, 'cause had to get the equipment back quickly so one of us could make it to work at 1AM. Too bad, Baby Flamehead was excellent in sound check, a weird acoustic based (through an amp) eclectic rock sound. ■ TWO FREE STOOGES (from L.A.)/HOPE/GIBSON GIRLS at Pyramid, 4/28/90: Gibson Girls on first, best I've seen them. Opened right up with their cover of THE ONLY ONES' "Another Girl, Another Planet," which was pretty sharp, though it's still hard to figure out why no one covers any other Only Ones' song from their 3 LPs, what goes on here? Gibson Girls come off as an American version of that great band, with hard riffs and strident melodies. Sometimes they sound like Wedding Present too, what with those long extended instrumental bits that end each song with the guitars just chugging away on 16th notes. Good band getting better. Hope was much the same as the CBGB show, though they started off the show like a house of fire with one of their favorite old songs that just kicked butt! At this best sound, they're one of the best NY bands. Much of the set was again devoted to more traditional hard rock (only with a much harder punk edge) with AC/DC like vocals from the passionate JESSIE MALIN. Good, but still want more of the older hard pop they excel at. Two Free

Stooges were playing Pyramid, 'cause they were touring with Red Hot Chili Peppers, who were off playing Ritz two nights supported by Dead Milkmen instead. They're unique in that they're the first lounge punk band ever! That's right, a punk band that's a lounge act! These two guys in old seer-sucker suits looking like Pee Wee Herman if he were a traveling salesman or a sneaky card shark, are the two "singers," though their function is more to tell stale lounge jokes, dance like re-revenge of the nerds, and sing like Devo crossed with R2-D2 from Star Wars. Pretty damn silly, though for comedy's sake they're so ridiculous they're occasionally amusing. The band is assembled of three guys having some fun on the side. The guitarist is former CIRCLE JERKS bassist and recent JOE STRUMMER sidekick ZANDER SCHLOSS, wearing a sharp light suit himself and looking like the splitting image of Colonel Sanders! He plays the "Green Acres" bits underneath the dumb jokes. The bassist and drummer are on loan from Big Takeover favorites THE QUESTION, though the bassist is actually Question's singer/guitarist/songwriter TONY RUGULO (Reached before the show, Rugulo denied Question had split and this was his new band, and confirmed that he would be re-assembling the group upon their return to L.A.). The set included intentionally inane covers of "Spinning Wheel" (who's that by, Looking Glass? Who remembers these things? Who wants to?), "Live and Let Die" and other such rot. Nice to see a preposterous group once in a while for therapeutic effect, but there have been better too. ■ That's all for now, maybe I will invest in some earplugs for next time. Could use 'em!

THE BUZZCOCKS



BUZZCOOCKS' STEVE DIGGLE (R) WITH BIG FAN GREG DUNLAP OF THIS MAGAZINE, BACKSTAGE AT ST. ANDREWS HALL, DETROIT, MI, NOV. 17, 1989 (photo: Jack Rabid)

BUZZCOOCKS interview (transcribed by Jack Rabid)
(Note: About 1/20th of this interview appeared in Rockpool, so if a passage or two sounds too familiar, it doesn't mean you've read the interview before.)
PETE SHELLEY and STEVE DIGGLE were interviewed at their hotel in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, on November 12, 1989. The night before, the recently reunited Buzzcocks had played at Philadelphia's Theater of The Living Arts, their 5th gig on the tour, and thus, their 5th gig in 9 years, and were relaxing before sound checking at Trenton's City Gardens. Shelley was suffering from a very bad cold, while Diggle was his usual chipper self.

Since Big Takeover had already conducted a very extensive 10 page interview with Diggle in

issue #23 (see Back issues, page 3; that interview also contains a brief history of Buzzcocks in the introduction, so none is offered here), and another a few months before this one for Alternative Press, (see A.P. issue #24; info: 1451 W. 112th St., Suite 1, Cleveland, OH 44102), more of the questions were directed at Shelley than would have been otherwise. However, both were involved in the conversation.

Since this interview took place, much has changed for Buzzcocks. After the December UK dates, drummer JOHN MAHER left the band. No one is quite sure why, but among the theories is 1) The 90 minute buzzsaw sets were taking their toll on him, and he just didn't want to play anymore 2) He wanted to go back to his business fixing Volkswagens and drag racing them and/or 3) The money wasn't enough to sustain him without his business. Whatever, his replacement turned out to be one MIKE JOYCE, late of THE SMITHS, interesting since Smiths were Buzzcocks fans. Since Smiths split, Joyce had been busy backing Julian Cope and later his old singer Morrissey. Buzzcocks cancelled their European tour plans, but were able to make it to Australia, New Zealand and Japan in February with Joyce on drums and the other 3/4 of the old late 70's lineup (Shelley, Diggle, and bassist STEVE GARVEY) still in tact, and reviews of the Australian gigs were as ecstatic as most of the UK and US ones. Since then there's been no news as to whether the group has signed with anyone, or whether they've begun work on a new LP as intended. One Manchester contact said he'd heard vague rumors that the group's reunion might end after all without new vinyl or more shows, but at present they remain mere rumors. Let us hope they are unfounded. Thanks to Chris Mesler for setting this up, to Pete and Steve for their time, and Jon Wells for the transport.

At the time, I couldn't believe they were back. (!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!) I still can't.

JR: Is that the Berlin Wall you're singing about at the end of these live versions of "Autonomy"? I can't make out what you're singing there.

STEVE: Well, it changes every night. What ever comes out, some ideas. "Autonomy" is always played in Germany anyway, and with the wall being knocked down, that enhances the song even more, there's even more reason to sing it. Even though it wasn't a political song in the sense of a standard political protest song. Autonomy has to do with self-rule, rule of yourself, to being in control of yourself.

JR: Both you and Steve were playing a few Buzzcocks songs in the live sets by your solo bands the last eight years. Where was it exactly that you decided to make another go at Buzzcocks, and when I say that, I know there was a point even fairly recently, that even if someone had offered you gigantic sums of money, you still would not have said yes to the proposition. Where exactly did your thinking change?

PETE: I don't know, it just seemed to be right at the time. It was always my proviso that we'd have, that it would be everybody. I didn't even fancy doing it unless it was everybody. It needed to be something that was worthwhile to do, rather than just playing, and schlocking around everywhere and doing that, trying to re-establish ourselves from the bottom up, I wasn't into that. It was a matter of things coming to us rather than us chasing after them. (Note: John Maher quit the band after the U.K. dates in November, and Shelley has decided to continue the band anyway without him. So, he's obviously changed his mind since, fortunately for Buzzcocks fans, though it won't be quite the same without the explosive Maher)

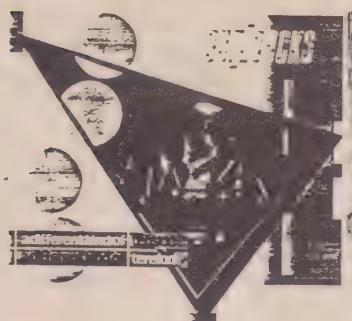
STEVE: The demand is still there. It was just a matter of seeing if the demand was still there, the demand came to us first.



1978: ANOTHER MUSIC
IN A DIFFERENT
KITCHEN (UA UK)



1978: LOVE BITES
(UNITED ARTISTS UK)



1979: A DIFFERENT
KIND OF TENSION
(I.R.S.)



1988: LEST WE FORGET
LIVE CASSETTE (ROIR
CASSETTES)

PETE: Yeah, there's always been interest, but how concrete that interest is is how you make your decisions, for John Maher and Steve Garvey, they've got married and have hardened day jobs shall we say. They've got commitments already, so things have to be well thought out and offer a certain measure of security for them to be able to do it. Having said that, it's not as if we're making huge amounts, people aren't giving us blank checks and saying "fill in your own amount." We still have another 3995 days to go before we make a million, so that's every night for the next 11 years or so. So we're not really making....it's like hard work.

STEVE: It's all to do with timing. You're right, if you'd asked us this time last year if we were getting back we would have said no. But, yeah, you don't know what's around the corner, it was a thing in the future where everybody was in a position to say yes.

JR: So you warmed up to it?

STEVE: Everybody's personal thing that we were doing,...they weren't running out, but it was probably a time for us all to have a change personally. Whether we're running off in four more different directions, or whether we're going together.

PETE: You wake up in the morning and you do things, then at night you feel tired so you lie down and you go to sleep and then you wake up again. All the other cycles which are happening in one's life, like relationships, you get involved with somebody and then that lasts for a while and it will be OK. Then it starts winding down, and it will finish, and then you'll have a time where you do nothing. And then something or someone new will come along, and it builds it right up again. And really, for me and Steve to be able to do something, it needed to get those two cycles in sync, so that at a time when I wasn't doing anything, when I had no

commitment to a band, to pay wages, to feed, no commitments to do an album or something like that.....I mean if I had embarked on an album project in the summer I wouldn't have been able to do this, I would have still been working, being involved in that. So it just so happened that the two of us were in sync, that we had all had this window, that started off we met just before Christmas last year, and now we can do it.

JR: But even as late as the middle of this year, weren't the two of you sort of feuding in the British Press, I remember picking up the NME a couple of times....

PETE: (Cutting him off, grumbling) Don't believe the British Press. There's no feuding going on.

JR: But you and Steve's manager were having a go at each other each week for a while, I saw it.

PETE: No not really, no in fact, my own manager RAF didn't get involved in the crossfire, didn't inch into it. Well.....(looking at Steve), the less said of it the better, really.

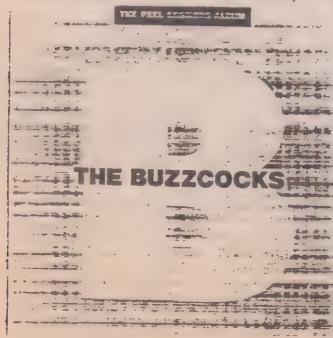
JR: So that was no obstacle to the two of you getting back together, obviously, that's what I'm driving at, since you're getting along so well now.

PETE: No, it wasn't an obstacle, 'cause it wasn't a problem, the only real problem which gives you that impression, is that whenever you interview two people separately, you ask one person one question, then phone up the other to get his response to what the first one said using selective quotes, you've got something. Then you just edit it so it looks like there's this battle going on. Makes more of a story, dunnit?

STEVE: It's all heightened really. Also the guy that was dealing with me at the time was dealing with me wrong, that's the reason I sacked him just recently. Also, the things he's said about me recently! It's kind of backfired hasn't it? (The ex-manager inferred to the Brit press that Steve

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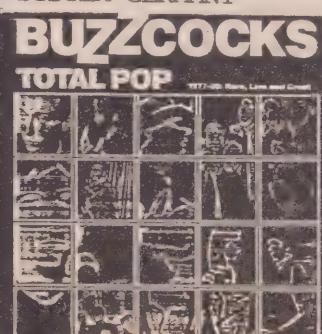
1989: THE PEEL SESSIONS COLLECTION
(STRANGE FRUIT UK)



1979: SINGLES GOING
STEADY ('77-'79 45s
A + B SIDES, I.R.S.)



1987: TOTAL POP
COMPILATION (WEIRD
SYSTEM GERMANY)



1981: PARTS 1-2-3
EP (LAST 3 SINGLES
COLLECTION, I.R.S.)



buzzcocks



spiral scratch

2/77:SPIRAL SCRATCH
EP(NEW HORMONES UK)



10/28/77: "ORGASM
ADDICT" (UA UK)



2/3/78: "WHAT DO I
GET" (UA UK)



4/14/78: "I DON'T
MIND" (UA UK)

was too "backward looking").

JR: OK, another topic. As solo artists, did you come to resent, particularly as time wore on, being constantly reminded that you were ex-Buzzcocks, having that shoved in your face, did you get the feeling people weren't giving your new stuff a chance on its own merits.

PETE: Yes! I mean, I tried to escape that a bit with the last band I had (called ZIP). 'Cause we had photos done deliberately out of focus so no one could see who was in it. And in the press releases, you know how press agents are like, if you said "Pete Shelley of the Buzzcocks" than no one was interested any more. It finally leaked out who was in the band, there was a great song and dance about the fact that it was my band.

JR: A failed attempt to remain anonymous?

PETE: That's possible, yeah. It's the kind of thing if you have an ego then you have a problem!

JR: You know JERRY LEE LEWIS tried to do that once, he released a single in the late 50's when his career was in ruins after marrying his little cousin MYRA, he put out an instrumental under the name "THE HAWK." It didn't work for him either, everyone figured out who it was 'cause his piano playing was so distinctive!

PETE: Good! But now we're getting the exact opposite, aren't we? Before people were asking us when we were going to get back the Buzzcocks, now people keep asking us when we're going to get back to doing more solo work! "Have you got a new solo LP coming out!" (all laugh) So you can't win!

STEVE: Now you're approached by people who weren't interested before, saying, "Didn't you do an album called Northwest Skyline" (Steve's last LP with his F.O.C. or FLAG OF CONVENIENCE)? It's all heightened now that you're not doing it really. Same as when we disbanded Buzzcocks.

JR: When you came back you gave yourself three weeks to rehearse for this tour, but I heard you didn't rehearse much! Is that right?

PETE: We did about five days. We spent most of the time waiting for food at the bar of the rehearsal studio.

STEVE: That was just a natural flow of events, just getting to know each other again. We spent as much time doing that.

PETE: I'm surprised how little rehearsal time it actually took.

JR: You mentioned that John Maher wanted to hear "Orgasm Addict" again before you tried it in your set. How much studying did you have to do of the actual records, and how much of this is just out of fond memory.

PETE: A lot of this was from memory. I listened to all the tracks that I thought...I made out a list and sent it to everybody, of two dozen tracks. And said, "These are the ones that I think we would all get to know, and we can add or subtract things

for the actual set as time goes on. So we did that, and somebody said "Let's do this song," and we'd try to get through it, and if need be listen back to it on CD.

JR: Technology's changed a lot since you were last around!

PETE: Well yes, the ideal thing about CDs is that you can find your place quite easily.

JR: I see all three of you are playing wireless guitars now, that's a new one for you. Anything else of the new technology you're taking advantage of that you didn't have ten years ago?

STEVE: Photocopy machines. Shavers are different.

JR: I mean musically!

STEVE: I use a guitar processor now, which wasn't around then. But really what we do doesn't require that many machines.

PETE: In the Buzzcocks' sound, all the technology we use is transparent so it doesn't get in the way, so it doesn't add or take away anything.

STEVE: It's all mind technology.

JR: A far cry, though, from when you started in '76 and were playing the cheapest guitars anyone had ever seen on stage back then.

PETE: I suppose so, but you can make music on anything. In Zaire they play these thumb pianos which they make their own pickups, and amplifiers that they conjure up out of old television sets and things like that, old radio sets, and they have wah wahs and all that. They're playing this music on completely home made instruments.

STEVE: But Pete still uses a relatively cheap guitar, it's not like he went out and bought the best. And the one I use is just the one I like, it's not necessarily the one with the right sound for this.

JR: I wanted to ask about some of the covers that have been done of your songs. How did you like PENETRATION's "Nostalgia?" (Buzzcocks: '78's Love Bites. Penetration: '78's Moving Targets)

PETE: That was OK, nice version, she (PAULINE MURRAY) can't get up as high as I do (all laugh).

JR: How about HEAVEN 17's "Are Everything."

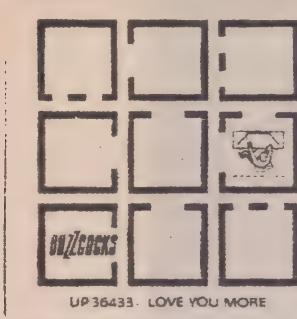
PETE: I like that actually, that's quite a good version of it.

JR: That actually came out on the heels of the original too, didn't it?

PETE: Yeah. I always enjoy other people doing that, I mean there's one I don't think you've even got down there. It's on a German compilation album, and a friend of mine that speaks German translated the name of the band to "The Unwilling Conscripts".

JR: No, uh, I don't have that on my list! (all laugh)

PETE: In Germany, all those people that have been drafted into the National Service.... They do a version of "You Say You Don't Love Me" (UK 45 and A Different Kind of Tension, '79). The way they do it is, they've all got headphones on, and they're listening to "You Say You Don't Love Me," and they do what most people do when they have headphones



EVERBODY'S HAPPY NOWADAYS

BUZZCOCKS

6/30/78: "LOVE YOU
MORE" (UA UK)

9/8/78: "EVER FALLEN
IN LOVE" (UA UK)

11/17/78: "PROMISES"
(UA UK)

3/2/79: "EVERYBODY'S
HAPPY NOWADAYS" (IRS)

on, they sing along, rather badly. They do all the drum bits, and guitar bits and guitar solos vocally.

JR: K-Tel Presents. Have you heard the new version of that that just came out by North Carolina's **WILL AND THE BUSHMEN**?

PETE: No.

JR: Just came out last month on S.B.K. What about "No Reply" by **S.S. DECONTROL** from Boston (Buzzcocks: '78's Another Music in a Different Kitchen. S.S. Decontrol: Get it Away EP, 1983)?

PETE: Uh, I think I do have a copy of that at home.

JR: Pretty bad, isn't it? Have you heard a worse vocal version of one of your songs?

PETE: Best, worse, it just depends on where you put the goalposts.

JR: There's a new one out from three weeks ago, on a compilation single in England, a band called **Les Thugs** from France do a live version of "Something's Gone Wrong Again" (Buzzcocks: '79 UK 45, Singles Going Steady. Les Thugs: Vinyl Solution sampler 7"). Have you heard that?

PETE: No! Nobody tells me, and the publishing company doesn't know anything.

JR: It's a four track single with them, and the **HARDONS**, who you're playing with tonight, as well as **MEGA CITY 4** and **BOMB DISNEYLAND**. Well you've heard **FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS** version on "Ever Fallen in Love," that was a hit for them.

PETE: Yeah! That's Good! I'm glad. It's helped finance this tour. (laughs)

JR: It's helped reawaken interest in Buzzcocks? Without which this tour wouldn't be possible?

PETE: Well it has,... In some ways it was almost a call to arms for people that they heard it, or they saw people liked it, so they had to tell everybody that it was a Buzzcocks song, and the Fine Young Cannibals have ruined it! (all laugh) (how did he know? We all did that, didn't we?)

JR: I think I was guilty of that!

PETE: Well there you are!

JR: In fact, I think what I said was that I hoped that people really got into their version, 'cause if they ever heard the original they'd probably faint on the spot. Two other covers. Both **CAMPER VON BEETHOVEN** and **THE WAYFARERS** have released versions of your hit single Steve, "Harmony in my Head."

STEVE: The Wayfarers? Don't know that one. Somebody sent me a tape of the Camper Von Beethoven one. I mean the chorus is good, but they popped a little organ on it somewhere on the verse bits, that makes it a bit funny! I'd like to see them do it live.

JR: Nice to have had so many bands playing your songs, isn't it (if we added live versions, we'd be here all night)? While you're gone.

PETE: I suppose so. I don't lie awake at night excited 'cause they've done it.

JR: But isn't it nice as a songwriter that people

appreciate your songs so much they want to play them themselves?

PETE: Oh, yeah, it's good as that. But I don't make much money off it.

JR: Well on the reverse side of things, have you ever done any covers aside from the two you were doing when you first started, **THE TROGS** ("I Can't Control Myself") and **CAPTAIN BEEFHEART** ("I Love You, You Big Dummy")?

PETE: Not really, no. But they were never released anyway, apart from the demos of our original set, that was just a bootleg (note, there's talk once again of Buzzcocks releasing them. The famous Times Up, Bootleg, a must for all fans of the "Spiral Scratch" EP).

JR: I know you appreciate the early **WHO** a lot Steve, and Pete, you said you like the early **KINKS**. Are there any other 60's bands you particularly admire?

PETE: I suppose in the 60's **THE BEATLES**. (pause)

JR: (surprised) No one else?

STEVE: There must be one or two others.

PETE: That's one of those questions you have to think about the answer. Even if you say you like The Beatles, there's certain tracks by The Beatles that I can't stand. And there's others that don't mean anything to me, they weren't the ones that I really got off on.

STEVE: There are other reference points.

JR: Is it true that you and **HOWARD DEVOTO** came together under the idea of doing a cover of **THE VELVET UNDERGROUND**'s "Sister Ray," as long as the original, and did you ever actually play that?

PETE: It wasn't really an idea, it was just the advert Howard put up at the College. That's the one I answered.

JR: Yes, but that's not an often covered song!

PETE: Yes, but he was asking for euphonium players on his notice!

JR: What? What is that? How do you spell that?

PETE: e-u-p-h uh, hmmm. I think o-n-i-u-m. It's Latin for sounds good. Like euphemism or euphoria.

JR: I never studied Latin.

PETE: I never did either!

JR: Did you play on this **TILLER BOYS** single released on your New Hormones label?

PETE: Yeah.

JR: Why aren't you listed anywhere on the sleeve. No one can tell you're on it.

PETE: I played guitar and other things. It doesn't say what I did on it, that I'm on it?

JR: No, it's a complete mystery (shows it to him).

PETE: Well, that's good, it's a mystery then, isn't it! (all laugh)

JR: You're completely anonymous.

PETE: I wasn't anonymous being a Tiller Boy!

JR: Big highlight in your career. How involved were Buzzcocks in the New Hormones label, or was that just **RICHARD**'s (**BOON**, their manager) thing?

PETE: It was mainly Richard's thing. There was



7/13/79: "HARMONY
IN MY HEAD" (UA UK)



10/79: "YOU SAY YOU
DON'T LOVE ME"-UA UK



WHY SHE'S A GIRL FROM
THE CHAINSTORE



11/80: "STRANGE
THING" (I.R.S.)

New Hormones management, there was New Hormones Records. So we weren't really involved. Well, we were involved in that he was managing us at the time, we were there at the time, but we weren't involved as shareholders or directors or anything. It was a vehicle, that's why "Big Noise in the Jungle" (the Tiller Boys single) came out.

STEVE: We didn't really pick any, or suggest any bands.

JR: A lot of punk fans who've bought your Spiral Scratch EP (the first New Hormones disc) must have been pretty surprised if they bought other records on the label looking for more Manchester punk! (the label is best described as eclectic, adventurous, minimalist post-punk, unique and before it's time).

PETE: Hmmmm. Interesting thought.

JR: I know it's still in the future, your plans to record a new LP this coming Spring when all these tours are finished, but I'm curious if you'd go back to working with your two previous producers, MARTIN RUSHENT and/or MARTIN HANNETT? Are they involved here in any way?

PETE: Martin isn't involved yet, 'cause we haven't thought out the particulars of recording yet, if we do.

JR: Well if you do, would you phone Rushent up?

PETE: He may get in contact himself. You never know those things. I saw him last Christmas.

JR: What's he working on these days?

PETE: I've no idea. I could give you his phone number (Steve laughs). I don't have his phone number actually, he's moved.

STEVE: We've just not got around to recording yet. We started off with this 4 week tour, then the British dates were added.

PETE: We've only been together 2 1/2 weeks so far. We might contact him. Who knows.

JR: Have either of you heard the new Buzzcocks' Live at the Roxy '77 album that just came out?

PETE: Well I've had a copy for about six weeks, so I've listened to it, yeah.

JR: So then it's an authorized release, they got your OK before they put it out?

PETE: Yeah, yeah, they needed nothing, so, the more the merrier.

JR: The reason I ask, is that although the sound quality is OK, like the two old cuts on the older Live at the Roxy LP (a 1978 compilation with 2 other Buzzcocks' tracks from the same show, plus Eater, Unwanted, Adverts, Slaughter and the Dogs, Wire, X-Ray Spex and Johnny Moped), the band itself sounds kind of shabby!

PETE: Oh yeah, the thing was, even with those two tracks they put on that album, it was OK.

JR: That was the only time you played the Roxy, right?

PETE: Yeah.

JR: Are there any better live recordings of the original lineup or that 2nd lineup with Garth on

bass lying around somewhere unreleased? Like The Screen on the Green show or something?

PETE: Well, there are tapes of those, but I think they're more of bootleg quality.

STEVE: The best one is on this Product package (new Buzzcocks' Box Set), though that's the next lineup with Garvey, in '78. The Lyceum gig.

JR: So what happened to your beard, Pete, from the late '79 U.S. tour? (Steve chuckles)

PETE: Oh, I don't know, it maybe took me a good forty minutes to shave it off in L.A.!

JR: How did you get involved in producing RED HARVEST's recordings two years ago?

PETE: Umm, I saw STEVE at this artist panel for Umbrella which is an independent labels support group, helping the indies, you can go to them for advice or share information. Almost like a mini Cartel. It's like a smaller independent one. He asked me.

JR: Anyone else you've worked with this way?

PETE: I've produced a few things. None that have actually seen the light of day.

JR: How about you Steve?

STEVE: No, not really. I had an offer to do the SENSELESS THINGS (a good band! Check out their new LP), 'cause that guy MARK always comes to the F.O.C. gigs. (Steve's brother Phillip did paint the sleeve to their first single though! Phil also did the backdrop for the Buzzcocks' '89 tour)

PETE: I had an offer to do NAKED RAYGUN.

JR: Oh! Have you heard them? They cover a lot of your songs. I know Steve, you saw them in London in May.

PETE: The last time I was in Chicago I met their drummer, ERIC.

JR: The night they played that gig in London, you were a short distance away in Islington doing that JOHNNY CASH covers benefit gig.

PETE: I did "Straight A's in Love." It's the only one I know.

JR: Not a big Johnny Cash fan I guess.

PETE: No, I like some things, but I don't go around whistling it all the time.

JR: What do you two think of playing a gig last night 15 miles away from where JOE STRUMMER was playing (Buzzcocks in Philly, Joe in Trenton)?

PETE: Didn't notice.

STEVE: Didn't notice, no.

JR: You're playing tonight where he played last night. Strange, huh? A coincidence.

PETE: We're both just on the road at the same time.

JR: Yes, but your first major tour was supporting THE CLASH on the White Riot tour ('77). It's like everybody's coming back all of a sudden.

PETE: Or maybe they're all going away.

STEVE: It's just the right time for him as well as it is for us. Guitar music is coming back. I don't think he would have done this a few years ago.



12/80: "WHAT DO
YOU KNOW" (I.R.S.)



2/80: "I BELIEVE"
(I.R.S. U.S. ONLY)

PETE: DEBBIE HARRY too!

JR: Do you think Steve's singing has improved in ten years, after 9 years of fronting his own band?

PETE: Uh....That's a loaded question! (Steve laughs). (joking) It obviously implies that I think he's better now. No, we've all improved.

STEVE: Different styles. If you listen to me on "Autonomy," that's got a clear voice, and I used to sing with more of a punk attitude, I'd shout and growl a lot. But that was deliberate.

JR: You're not being gruff and screaming out the words like those days, huh.

STEVE: No, I'm onto something else now, that's the way it is now. But if you listen to the recordings of "Autonomy" and "Love is Lies" and stuff like that, it's a different kind of voice, it's not fighting me voice as well. It's boring to do just one thing. But I agree, it has improved. It's more flexible now.

PETE: That's almost like asking if your writing has improved.

JR: I sure hope so! Has every interviewer asked you, as they have THE WHO, THE STONES, JEFFERSON AIRPLANE, THE DAMNED, S.I.F., etc., are you just just doing this for the money?

STEVE: Yes.

PETE: Well no, not everybody asked that. People ask why we're doing it. I told a few people actually, there'd have to be a bloody lot of it for us to be doing it for the money! Like the Stones.

JR: The correlation to that question is, do you think that people are automatically cynical about reunions of this sort, always assuming that it must be a cash-in all the time. They could never imagine you might enjoy doing this?

PETE: Awhhh, some people when you mention Christmas go "humbug" don't they? (both laugh) Can't fancy the chance of having a bit of fun and people genuinely being nice to each other and things like that.

STEVE: If it was just the money we could have had it years ago. Why wait ten years, we could have had it three years after we split up. It wouldn't have been possible to work together for love or money.

PETE: If we were just doing it for the money, we wouldn't have split up in the first place. We would have just carried on and no one would have noticed, like U2 and SIMPLE MINDS and CURE, they've all like stuck together. In the meantime, that's paid off.

STEVE: If you said to someone who works at this hotel "Do you get paid for what you do" you know, it's just part of the job, really.

JR: Like people who won't go to a gig unless they're on the guest list, yet they'd never expect to get a can of corn at the supermarket for free. I've never understood the mentality either. People don't want to support the arts with their own money, yet

they want their artists to be somehow free of monetary necessities I'd sooner you make some money from this tour in the hope it would encourage you to keep playing, as opposed to losing your shirts.

PETE: I don't want lots of money. It only creates loads of problems.

JR: By the same token, does it weird you out to be standing on a stage in 1989 as Buzzcocks, playing Buzzcocks songs? I know it does me out there watching you, like "I can't believe I'm seeing this." Like an old friend rising from the grave.

PETE: It seems a natural thing, really. I mean, sometimes if you say, "Gee, isn't it weird," then it'll make it seem weird, but when you actually do it, it's perfectly natural.

STEVE: It's natural on stage 'cause that's how we know best to work together. That's all we know, it's a natural environment for us. You're not really stopping to go through any strange things about it, even though it may seem strange after a break for 8 years. In hours, in the space of seconds, everything's just fallen back into place.

JR: It seems like there's a lot of emotion up there on stage. Is that because it's just the early stages of the tour and you haven't played in 8 years, or can we expect that to continue for a long time. All this on stage embracing and stuff.

STEVE: I think there's a greater depth to what we're doing in some way. Emotions. As people, the songs haven't changed, but we're more emotional about each other now.

PETE: You should see us before we go on stage, we're like "Oh noooooo" (like a kid crying).

JR: By the same token the times have changed so radically, it seems there are extraordinarily few bands that play the sort of music that you do. Particularly those who've had any success, who've broken out of just the small clubs for 35 people.

STEVE: Yeah, I mean I think that's one good thing, we have got the opportunity, the name Buzzcocks still means something. And we can still do guitar music. A lot of bands who do guitar music are having a hard time, it's been the wrong climate. But once you've got a bit of a reputation it sometimes...it's good to do guitar music and have a lot of attention focused on it really.

JR: (To Pete) What kind of mood were you in when you wrote side two of A Different Kind of Tension?

PETE: Well what kind of mood does it seem I was in? (laughs)

STEVE: Happy!

JR: Oh, gay! Carefree!

PETE: I suppose I wasn't, no!

JR: Does it seem kind of strange like at New York at the Ritz, to see 3000 people singing at the top of their lungs a line like "There is no love in this world anymore?" (from "I Believe" from side two of that LP)

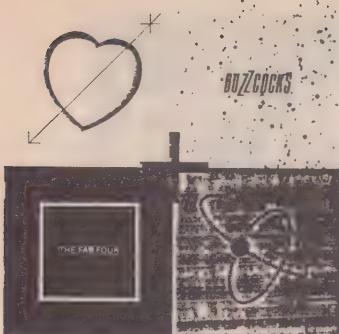
PETE: It does in some way, because I thought I was the only one who felt that way (all laugh) when I wrote that!

JR: Were you the one who subtitled the two sides of that LP, side one "the rose and the chocolate box" and side two "the thorn beneath the rose?" Steve said he thought it was RICHARD BOON.

PETE: No, they were quotes of (Sounds' writer then and now) JON SAVAGE's, both of those and the LP title. From earlier reviews of Love Bites.

STEVE: Occasionally those odd lines get grafted on to the different things we do, like tours. This one is called "telling friends."

PETE: Also, on the spine of the record it just says "It's only the 3rd album," it doesn't say A Different Kind of Tension. There were all kinds of cryptic things, there was plenty to keep people busy. If you add up all the letters,...I'll let you find



1989: "4 PLAY EP" (EMI UK)



1978: "I AM THE AMAZING" EP (WIZARD)

out about that for yourself. (what a tease)

STEVE: The tapestry we weave like that, eventually appears on the records as mysteriously as they appeared in the first place.

JR: Could you imagine playing "Hollow Inside" or "Money" or even "A Different Kind of Tension" live, since I've never seen you do them, and I've not heard live tapes. That's quite a side of music!

PETE: No, we did them in the past. When we first wrote them. I mean, Steve Garvey suggested we do "Money" on this tour, but we didn't get around to doing it.

JR: What about stuff like, when was the last time you did old songs like "Friends of Mine" or "Whatever Happened to" since you do a lot of the other old ones pretty consistently over your 4 US tours.

PETE: At least ten years ago.

JR: Do you ever do "Paradise" (also never in US)

PETE: We used to do it, we did on the Europe tour for that LP. It's a long time since we did "Operator's Manual" or "Nostalgia"....

JR: One of the reasons I mentioned the 60's groups, is a lot of them started out as great pop groups, and as the 70's and 80's wore on, they all lost their edge, and most of their work got pretty pitiful in my opinion. But as the 60's wore on, they were evolving out of the standard r'n'b into something both lyrically and musically more challenging. I thought Buzzcocks were doing that too, first with the Tension LP side 2 and then especially the last three singles trilogy.

PETE: It's inevitable. Did you ever find out that when you start making a sandwich, you're making two sandwiches, by the time you make the first one, you've learned something that enables you to make the 2nd one a lot easier. (economies of scale?) See. By doing anything repetitious, by the time you get to doing a lot of things, and you've learned lots of little tricks like that, you can go on from there. But usually you end up making only one sandwich! (all laugh)

JR: For instance, though, how much of Buzzcocks progression was a reaction against the press and public perception of Buzzcocks as just a love song hard pop group with two minute pop ditties. Backing you into a corner.

PETE: I don't know, it can be interpreted as a reaction, but you know we just responded to more positive things as often.

JR: Does it infuriate you that a lot of people called you a great singles band that seemed to slag your albums off all the time?

PETE: It doesn't bother me what anybody said. Yeah, a thousand people, yeah, if 999 people like it and there's one who doesn't, if you take any notice of that guy...you just carry on doing it. In fact, it's more damaging for people to be continually praised for what they do. 'Cause that means you stop trying to change, trying to do things different,

'cause you've got this fear of people maybe not liking what you're doing. That tends to make you more the same which is more damaging. Then people who don't like what you're doing, you can always turn your back on them. If people like what you do, it's harder to say "sorry if you don't like this, but this is what we're doing now."

STEVE: Also, the singles were so successful, so that....some groups survive on albums and never have a hit single.

JR: The last time I spoke to Steve, I told him it seemed that you were the last of the great 7" singles bands, a medium that seems to be going right by the wayside. In fact what few singles that are released these days are invariably album tracks released solely to promote that album. You had non-LP singles coming out every two or three months, like the great 60's groups.

PETE: Well the old business doesn't like things like that anymore. They consider singles as being a loss. They're just there to sell albums as you say, they're not there to exist on their own.

JR: Would you persist in releasing great non-LP singles that way if and when you start making records again, or would you be more inclined to fit in with the current dictums of the marketplace?

PETE: Well, we'll use that if we see fit!

JR: THE SMITHS seem to do that more recently, though theirs came out as 12"s as well.

PETE: Well, they got that idea from Richard Boon. When you come to MARK SMITH (of THE FALL), that's all they did, was steal his ideas.

JR: MORRISSEY is an old fan of yours, isn't he?

PETE: Yeah, he used to come to our gigs (We're told he even tried to reform the original Buzzcocks for the '86 10th anniversary G-Mex festival in Manchester, but was unsuccessful).

JR: Anything else to add? What would you say if you got up on stage on MARK PERRY's invitation to speak to an audience like on "Alternatives to NATO?"

PETE: I wouldn't get up. I really only respond to questions, I don't actually go around telling people things. It's not my nature, I'm very shy. As it says in the I Ching, "Those who know don't speak, those who speak don't know."

JR: Nothing final to tell us.

PETE: I will leave the last word to you Jack. It's more important, it doesn't even matter what I say, I have a vested interest in saying something good about us. It has more weight, really, if other people say what they feel about Buzzcocks than anything we two can say. All we can do is supply the answers to questions really, we can't actually give the substance to anything about what the Buzzcocks experience is all about. So the other people can do that, 'cause we're too much on the inside of it all to know what the outside really looks like.

STEVE: It's like an abstract sculpture; no one knows what it's saying, but it still looks good and it still feels good.

THE UNDERTONES/ THAT PETROL EMOTION

DAMIEN O'NEILL interview, Part 2 (transcribed by
Jack Rabid)

This concludes the Damien O'Neill interview, which took place in the living room of his London flat, May 20, 1989. Since the interview, THAT PETROL EMOTION have released their 4th LP Chemical, produced by SCOTT LITT (who did the last 2 R.E.M. LPs), and will be touring the U.S. in support of it as this mag hits the stands. The appropriate introduction for Damien's career in UNDERTONES and



1979: THE UNDERTONES
(SIRE)



4/80: HYPNOTISED
(SIRE)



1981: THE POSITIVE
TOUCH (EMI)



1983: THE SIN OF
PRIDE (EMI)

The Petrols is found before part one, printed last issue. If you enjoy this, we refer you to that earlier part of this same conversation. Lastly, it seems that The Undertones reunion that almost took place in honor of John Peel's 50th birthday (canceled at last minute when Darien's brother **JOHN (SEAN)** had to deal with a family problem), will not be occurring at any other time in the future; what with the things Damien says about singer **FEARGAL SHARKEY**, it's surprising it almost happened at all! As for Peel, he made due with The Fall, House of Love, Wedding Present & Pete Shelley instead, poor guy! But no "Teenage Kicks" for the great man.

JR: What's **BILLY DOHERTY** doing these days?

DAMIEN: Well, he's got a group. He's been quiet, he got a job straight away when the Undertones broke up in '83. And Billy was always, I never really got on that well with Billy, things got worse near the end. But I always found Billy really selfish where it concerned a group, and he was. He always suited himself first before the group. Anyway, I don't want to tell you all these stories. Anyway, he got a job for a few years, but the last few years he's got a group together, **THE CARALINES**, pretty crappy name. He's playing drums, there's 4 of them, I heard some songs of theirs and I wasn't too impressed, kind of like U2 and **SIMPLE MINDS** kindof thing. Anyway, they got a lot of interest from Virgin records..

JR: That's ironic since you're on them now.

DAMIEN: Yup, funny. In so much as they went over to Ireland to see them play. Things have been held on ice since then because the other members of the band are all in University and they finish this year. So you never know, you might hear from them soon, Virgin might sign them, I don't know.

JR: He wrote "Billy's Third," didn't he. (Yes) One of your best songs ever.

DAMIEN: Naahhh! It's not that good. Billy wrote it, but let's say he had a lot of help from other people, same thing, John helped him out with "Wrong Way," both times he let Billy keep all the credit. No, Billy's not a songwriter.

JR: What about **MICKEY BRADLEY**?

DAMIEN: Mickey's now got a full-time job at a radio station in Derry. He's a DJ. He's really happening there, he makes a bit of money.

JR: Hope he's playing your records.

DAMIEN: No, he wouldn't. He can play a lot of independent stuff on his show, but Mickey's a bit embarrassed about the Undertones for some reason, I don't know, maybe because he still lives over there, he doesn't want to be remembered as Mickey Bradley of the Undertones, he'd rather be known as himself.

JR: I can think of worse things to be remembered as.

DAMIEN: Well, Mickey always had this thing about being in a group, you know, he never really wanted

to be known, so he plays it down a lot. John always did to this day. I'm the only one that likes to talk about the Undertones to people.

JR: I'm glad I'm talking to you then. Music doesn't die when it's no longer current I think.

DAMIEN: Yes. That's because mainly because I've always liked being in a group. Of all the members of The Undertones, I was the only one who liked to tour and stuff. **FEARGAL** did to a certain respect, though he did it for recognition. I just did it for fun. Plus I was the youngest, so I had more fun than the rest as well. I didn't have a steady girlfriend to go home to and cry about, so...I had fun on the road, also I kept a scrapbook of everything, so I know more about the Undertones than the rest of them put together.

JR: What do you remember about the tour with **THE CLASH** and **SAM AND DAVE** in America in '79?

DAMIEN: Oh yeah, that was great. It only lasted 2 1/2 weeks.

JR: Must have been a big thrill.

DAMIEN: Oh, Jesus, yeah, The Clash at their prime as well, 'cause that was London Calling.

JR: Well yeah, 3 months before it was released, though it had already been recorded, they played 5 songs off it I remember.

DAMIEN: Amazed at how big the places they were playing were. They just asked us out of the blue to support them. Before that we actually met them, 'cause we were going to do this big festival in Derry, with The Clash, **THE DAMNED** and **THE BOYS**.

JR: The Boys? Really? That would be around Alternative Chartbusters, right?

DAMIEN: Yeah, they were big, well, not big, but we liked 'em. "First Time." 'Cause Derry never got any bands, everybody just played Belfast. **IAN DURY** played at Derry and that's about it. So we were determined to put Derry on the rock 'n' roll map. Then the festival fell through, the last stages, 'cause **JOE STRUMMER** got a letter from some paramilitary loyalist threatening him, saying "We'll get you if you play." 'Cause he was wearing an H-Block t-shirt in press photos at the time, about our political prisoners. So The Clash told us they couldn't do it. And it was never revealed, that story, it was just canceled and no reason was given.

JR: Maybe that's the reason...I always thought it funny that Clash never wrote a song about Northern Ireland, particularly after they reaped all that publicity by posing in front of (Belfast's) Ulster Hall when they weren't allowed to play there. Yet they were writing about Nicaragua, etc.

DAMIEN: Right, I remembered those photos, that was sick, them being flown all the way over to Northern Ireland and posing in front of the barbed wire. You think about it now....They were supposed to play, in '78, that's when that happened, they did play at Ulster Hall much later, I was there in the front row, gobbing at **MICK JONES**. I admit it. (Jack



1983: ALL WRAPPED UP
(SINGLES A+B EMI UK)



1986: CHER O'BOLIES
(G. HITS, EMI UK)



1987: PEEL SES. EP
(STRANGE FRUIT UK)



1989: PEEL SESSIONS
(STRANGE FRUIT UK)

laughs) A year later, there I am playing with him.

JR: And he was gobbing at you! (both laugh)

DAMIEN: Yeah, that tour was brilliant, it was great memories, it was our first tour in America as well, we just did the East Coast and a few dates in Canada. We didn't do the West Coast with them because John and Billy didn't want to do the whole tour, which is sad. True story. Sam and Dave just did the 2 nights in New York, we played with BO DIDDLEY as well, and DAVID JOHANSEN of NEW YORK DOLLS, we couldn't believe it! And we met Bo Diddley as well, which was incredible, backstage.

JR: Diddley was on the first Clash tour 7 months before that, with PEARL HARBOR AND THE EXPLOSIONS.

DAMIEN: When we played, a lot of people didn't turn up until much later when the Clash played, 'cause we weren't that well known.

JR: They put you on right at 8 one of the nights at Palladium in New York, 'cause they were broadcasting The Clash live over WPIX. I left my friends in a bar across the street, White Rose, and they missed you entirely! They were so mad.

DAMIEN: Yeah, we went on really early, 'cause usually there was 3 bands and we were on first. But it didn't matter, I just remember getting really drunk and watching The Clash every night. Hearing "Armageddon Time" for the first time, and "London Calling," that stuff was great.

JR: And "Clampdown," and "Guns of Brixton."

DAMIEN: But we were really shy people, we didn't socialize with them that much, we kept to ourselves.

JR: Too bad!

DAMIEN: Yeah! Regrettable. And the worst, sad story, the very last show, The Clash wanted to come on the stage and play "Teen-age Kicks" with us, and we said "No."

JR: You said no? (shocked)

DAMIEN: Yeah! 'Cause we had this thing about groups jamming together, as a hippy kind of thing. so we said no, can you fuckin' believe it?

JR: Don't think it's hippy anymore, huh? (laughs)

DAMIEN: I'd jump on it now. Jesus! And they were very surprised we said no!

JR: Yeah, you should have seen the look on NAKED RAYGUN's face when STEVE DIGGLE joined them on stage last night, for "Harmony in my Head."

DAMIEN: I think this is worse, 'cause this is The Clash! But I did get to play through Mick Jones' amp one night, 'cause mine broke down. But they were really nice to us, especially Mick Jones himself, he always talked to us a lot. Great memories. Then we did our own tour a year later.

JR: I remember the Irving Plaza and Hotel Diplomat shows.

DAMIEN: The Irving Plaza show was brilliant. You were there?

JR: Yeah. There were pictures from that in an issue of Trouser Press with Rolling Stones on the cover, and I spotted myself in the crowd right away, and

a few really good friends of mine. Sometimes I take that out and look at it, to see my older friends who I don't see anymore.

DAMIEN: Is that right? That was a good magazine.

IRA ROBBINS: He's writing reviews for a New York paper now, he slagged off our recent show at The World there.

JR: I saw that in The New York Post. He said good things about you as well you know.

DAMIEN: Yeah, he was a bit mixed. He said he didn't like the funky stuff.

JR: I agreed with him there at that particular show.

DAMIEN: Well, it was the first show on the tour.

JR: You don't think of it that way when you're reviewing a show, you go on what you see.

DAMIEN: Fair enough. I met Ira last year at the CMJ seminar, he's a nice guy.

JR: Yes, he really is. Do you remember doing the Radio Radio program in New York on WPIX, the show that interviewed you and asked you to DJ? (I miss that show) When you were first in town on the Clash tour?

DAMIEN: Was that broadcast from Tramps? We just did an interview, we didn't play? Yeah, I don't think I have a tape of that.

JR: They'd have you pick a song or two. Like when DAVID BOWIE was on that same year ('79) he had them play "God Save The Queen" and the new (2nd) TALKING HEADS LP, which was really cool.

DAMIEN: I remember that, 'cause RONNIE SPECTOR was there that night, she was interviewed as well, so we got to meet her!

JR: You were having a ball on that tour!

DAMIEN: Oh yeah! American tour, oh yeah, that was great! A bit nostalgic, but great memories. And later, playing clubs on our own, knowing you're seeing these towns you've always heard about for the first time, Chicago, New York, doing what you love best and getting paid for it. It's great!

JR: Had you ever heard THE SAINTS' version of "Save Me" before you recorded yours? (Undertones)

DAMIEN: No, I didn't even know they did it!

JR: 3rd LP in '78, Prehistoric Sounds.

DAMIEN: Shit! (looks disturbed) Prehistoric Sounds? They do a version of SMOKEY ROBINSON's "Save Me?" What's it like?

JR: Oh, it's hot, really racy horns. I know you liked the Saints, I thought maybe that's where you got the idea to do the song too.

DAMIEN: Shit! No. Huh. God! I like our version as well, I thought that should have been a single (from The Sin of Pride), the first single, instead of "Got to Have You Back" which is embarrassing.

JR: What went wrong with The Sin of Pride? Whose fault was that?

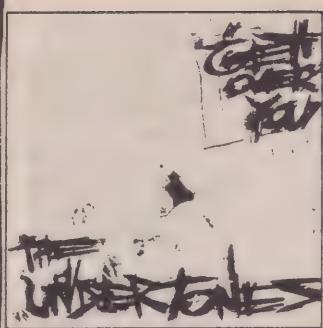
DAMIEN: The group was disintegrating, so it was going to happen anyway.

JR: You can hear it in the grooves. It's really uninspired.

THE UNDERTONES

TEENAGE KICKS

9/78: "TEENAGE KICKS"
(GOOD VIBRATIONS UK)



1978: "GET OVER YOU" (SIRE UK)

THE UNDERTONES



1979: "JIMMY JIMMY"
(SIRE UK)

THE UNDERTONES



1979: "HERE COMES THE SUMMER" (SIRE UK)

DAMIEN: Umm. FEARGAL elected, I don't mean to pass the buck to him, but....JOHN and Feargal had a big falling out 6 months before that over money. I don't know if I should tell you this.

JR: This is for public consumption.

DAMIEN: No, I can't...Oh, shit, I might as well tell you, so people will understand. It was over songwriting and publishing, right? The songs had always been split 5 ways, equally, and by 1983 John's pissed off because he's had to give away all of his songs, he wrote all the hit singles, most of the songs on the albums are his. He was getting pissed giving away all his money to us. So, Feargal and John clashed at a meeting, when John said he wanted to keep most of the songwriting royalties, and the rest of us would get like 20% or something to split. And everybody agreed except Feargal, Feargal freaked. Feargal in fact threatened to leave the group if that happened. So, John got defeated just to appease Feargal, and that was a bone of contention that John never forgot. So by Sin of Pride, John was getting fed up with the way Feargal was singing some of his songs as well. He didn't like it, Feargal was getting too dramatic with his voice, too false, as you can tell on his new, last record.

JR: Every one of them except the first single or two with (ex-REZILLOS/SHAKE/HUMAN LEAGUE) JO CALLIS.

DAMIEN: So there's an uneasy atmosphere between John and Feargal. There always was, but it just got worse and worse. And when we went to make the LP, we had MIKE HAYS as the producer. That was our best produced LP in my opinion (worst in mine, but no matter), but we picked the wrong songs on that LP. There's crap like "Bye Bye Baby Blue" which is absolute shit. "Got to Have You Back" was supposed to be a b-side, EMI wanted it as a single, so that ended up on the LP too. There's other stuff, regrettably, I have 3 outtakes from that era that never made it on record, which are fucking far superior. I'll make you a copy.

JR: Did you ever hear anything from the Human League after you spoofed them in "My Perfect Cousin?" (funny that Feargal and Callis worked together later, though Callis was not yet a H.L. member when the song was written in '80)

DAMIEN: (laughs) No, actually when that came out we heard from BOB LAST their manager (head of the Fast Products label as well, home of Fire Engines etc.), and he was quite chuffed that we mentioned them, even though it was in the wrong way of thinking. Again, put that down to naivete. That was me, that was my idea to put that in. "Get the Human League in to advise her. Art school boys." We thought the Human League were really pretentious arseholes. It turned out they were really nice people. Well they were a bit art school, but, after that they became huge with "Dare" and "Regret," they became a pop group, good singles. But at that

time...

JR: Yeah, well, that's a big departure from the sound they had when you mentioned them (very electronic noisescapes, very post-punk)!

DAMIEN: Yeah, I didn't like "Being Boiled," or any of that shit. But, that's embarrassing to me now.

JR: I don't know, I always thought it was funny, more amusing than that really calling them assholes or anything. I could see why their manager liked it.

DAMIEN: Well, it is a funny line. There are worse things than that I suppose if we're talking embarrassing. "More Songs About Chocolate and Girls," I cringe when I hear that now.

JR: Really! I like that! What would the world be without "There Goes Norman" and chocolate and girls? Can't you see the essential charm?

DAMIEN: Yeah I suppose. But it was that charm which really got us at the end, we were growing up and we were still being treated like we were these schoolkids, you know? Well we weren't! That's why the Positive Touch LP marked a big difference in the songwriting, it was much more mature, especially from John. The production is really shit on that album, it suffered. And by Sin of Pride we'd just outgrown this naivete, basically.

JR: the motown/soul influences were creeping in.

DAMIEN: Yeah, that too. Actually, during Positive Touch, we were listening to (ROLLING STONES) Between the Buttons. And "Life's Too Easy" is like that.

JR: And "Hard Luck" before it was a GARY GLITTER homage, right?

DAMIEN: Yeah, that was just a joke. We always loved Gary Glitter. We did SLADE as well. We always had acknowledgments of the 70's, of the really good sounding singles, of glam. I'll always love ROXY MUSIC, stuff like that. DAVID BOWIE. We once covered "Suffragette City?"

JR: What? Every Frat Party cover band does that!

DAMIEN: Way back in the early days. I have set lists, you'd just die if you saw them.

JR: Have you ever heard WEDNESDAY WEEK, from L.A., who took their name from your (Undertones) song?

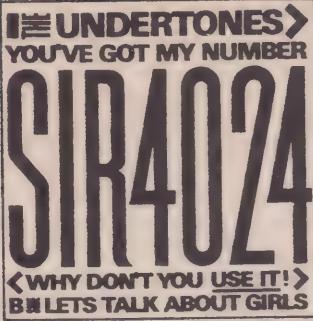
DAMIEN: Yeah, I have their Betsy's House EP. I never play it. I didn't like it. Are they still going?

JR: Yes. Their last LP was much better, very different. (Note: Wednesday Week broke up 5/90)

DAMIEN: Somebody told me about them, someone who had an American girlfriend vaguely knew them. There's also a group called SIGN EXPLODE.

JR: Have you ever heard anyone cover Undertones or That Petrol Emotion songs?

DAMIEN: Unfortunately, there's not many that I've heard. I heard a band from Australia recently, they did "Jesus Says," it's a pretty awful version. By GRAVITY PIRATES. There's a Dutch band that recorded "There Goes Norman," which I wish I had a copy of, but I don't. But that's it. I'm pissed off, nobody really covers us.



8/79: "YOU'VE GOT MY NUMBER" (SIRE UK)



1980: "MY PERFECT COUSIN" (SIRE UK)



6/80: "WEDNESDAY WEEK" (SIRE UK)



1981: "IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN" (EMI UK)

JR: That's at least a good choice! I've seen American bands do stuff from the 1st Undertones LP live, but they didn't record it.

DAMIEN: Yeah, VOICE OF THE BEEHIVE do "It's a Good Thing." It's not that good. It's not that good at all. (Their version of COMSAT ANGELS' "Independence Day" is even worse!)

JR: Well your singer Steve goes out with one of them, right?

DAMIEN: Yes. Actually, we did that a couple of nights together at the end of the US tour.

JR: A friend of mine gave me a piece of intelligence. The last show before your brother John quit That Petrol Emotion, I hear you were supposed to play an Undertones song or two for nostalgia's sake, but he wasn't into it.

DAMIEN: No, it wasn't even mentioned. I have to say I did think about it, but I never even suggested it, 'cause I knew John would be "no way." Which is sad, I would have loved to do "Teenage Kicks!"

JR: That's what you would have chosen?

DAMIEN: Oh yeah. It would have been, 'cause that was the first single, and one of our best.

JR: A favorite guitar song. An amazing sound.

DAMIEN: (holds up guitar, in pictures last issue) This is actually the guitar I used when we recorded that 11 years ago.

JR: It still says Undertones on it. A "CSL?"

DAMIEN: It's a Japanese copy I got for 80 quid in 1977.

JR: It looks like it's done some touring.

DAMIEN: It was a great guitar in its time. For a copy, it's a great sound.

JR: Did you ever hear a song called "Another Dead Soldier" by ANTI-PASTI? (no) That was a rip-off of "Teenage Kicks." GARY BUSHELL noticed that.

DAMIEN: Bushell was a dickhead. One of my proudest moments is the solo in "Teenage Kicks" it's so simple yet so effective. I didn't get to do many good solos after that, but that's one I'm proud of.

JR: That reminds me. Why after spending even a minor sum of 1000 pounds to acquire the rights to the four songs on that "Teenage Kicks" EP did you go and re-record in a terribly inferior form, that LP version of "True Confessions," one of your greatest songs ever wasted! And the world never heard the incredible original version!

DAMIEN: God. What was that? I don't really remember, 'cause I hate that song on the LP as well. "True Confessions" we always preferred to "Teenage Kicks," we thought it was a better song as well. "Teenage Kicks" wasn't even supposed to be a single, it was just an EP that came out. We didn't think "Teenage Kicks" was going to be this popular song the way it turned out. We preferred "True Confessions," I just don't remember why we didn't put that EP version on the album, I just don't know.

JR: Particularly since the EP version of "Teenage Kicks" made it to the U.S. LP. It seemed strange

to have this completely reworked (without guitars!) version of "True Confessions" there.

DAMIEN: Who's idea? Who's to blame? God.

JR: You don't remember who said "why don't we try this again."

DAMIEN: Don't remember whose idea it was to turn it into this DONNA SUMMER-like thing, it's embarrassing. That's me singing as well!

JR: What about "Emergency Cases" and "Smarter Than You," were those considered for the 1st LP?

DAMIEN: Yeah, they're good. But for the LP we wanted to give value for money, that's why we didn't put "Teenage Kicks" and "Get Over You" on the LP (they made it to the U.S. version though!) either, we had 15 completely new songs. Those days remember were different, Buzzcocks were sticking out singles and it would never be on their next LP. Things have changed since then of course. You can't even get away with doing that now (though Mega City 4 does, they're just being admirably stubborn. More power to shucking the tide!).

JR: They didn't have 12" singles back then too, that's been such a sorry development! It's really responsible for killing the single if you ask me. They spend money on wasted vinyl when they used to buy 7" records.

DAMIEN: Yeah maybe. There's a 12" of "My Perfect Cousin" reissued. But it wasn't 'til near the end of Undertones when the 12"s came in, we did "Got to Have You Back" on 12".

JR: That's right, the early 80's is when the change came in. Sad day. What was "She Could Only Say No?" Was that what you did when you broke a string and had to change it?

DAMIEN: Yeah, it's true, that's what we'd done at the Casbah. (Derry club immortalized on the 1st LP) We played it once in England. The actual version on the record isn't live, it just sounds live, but it's us in the studio. That's great, I love that song, John wanted to sing!

JR: Was there a longer version or was that it?

DAMIEN: No, it was always a minute or less. We always liked short songs, like "I Don't Wanna See You Again" was one of the first we ever wrote.

JR: "Smarter Than You" as well.

DAMIEN: You know, I'd love to hear that again!

JR: You don't have copies of some of this stuff?

DAMIEN: I have on compilations. I don't have "Teenage Kicks" EP, I don't. I had 5, I gave them to a friend to keep them for me, and since then he's lost them. Plus somebody stole my 10 copies of the original black and white LP which you can't get anymore.

JR: Yeah, even the UK version now is using the American sleeve, which is stupid.

DAMIEN: Yeah, I don't like that cover. Xerox. Funny, when that was reissued, that was Sire's idea to make more money, to stick "Teenage Kicks" and "Get Over You" on the American version, it got released



9/81: "JULIE OCEAN"
(EMI UK)



2/82: "BEAUTIFUL
FRIEND" (EMI UK)

over here as well like that. We sold 80,000 of the first original album, then they reissued it with a new catalog number. If they didn't reissue it, we would have had a gold record. But because of the reissue with new number, it counts as a new record totally! So to this day, we never even got a gold record or a silver record, or nothing. Not that I care.

JR: You probably would have lost that too. Give it to your friend to keep.

DAMIEN: Probably! But I would have liked that, we eventually sold over 100,000 but it didn't count. I don't care about gold records but for the first one it would have been nice.

JR: Yeah, but you know, most good bands go their whole lives lucky to sell 2000-5000 copies of anything. And you aimed low when you started.

DAMIEN: That's right, as I said before, there was no career in mind at all, it was just for a bit of a laugh.

JR: Was "Mars Bars" the only song you wrote about chocolate?

DAMIEN: Oh, you mean, "More Songs About Chocolate and Girls?" (laughs) Yeah. Again, I've got a friend, an Undertones freak, who loves that song. And it's in fact on the juke box in a pub in Camden (North London) as well. And it was on the other night, funny enough, when I was there. (Jack laughs) And again, it was embarrassing to me. It's not that I'm that embarrassed, but I cringe a little bit, 'cause it's just a stupid song!

JR: It's like an advert.

DAMIEN: Right. I always hoped Mars would pick it up, I could have earned a lot of money from that!

JR: Maybe you should try again now.

DAMIEN: That's a good idea, I could use the money. They're still around, they're one of the biggest chocolate companies.

JR: Try a disco version or something!

DAMIEN: (laughs) Yeah, that's it, a disco version.

JR: So is it because you split the songwriting royalties 5 equal ways, was that why you and John came out of The Undertones with no money?

DAMIEN: Well, we never really sold that many records. The first two did OK. Yeah, Positive Touch and Sin of Pride were abysmal sales. John and I, when we came out of the Undertones, we didn't have much money, it's all gone. We did OK, you know, we all had mortgages in Derry, even me. I had a 20,000 beautiful semi-detached bungalow which I had for a year. So I could afford the mortgage for a year. But I sold that afterwards, after we broke up. Yeah, we were pretty broke by the time we finished Undertones. I think I lived on some Undertones royalties for 6 months, then I went on the dole.

JR: Everyone thinks that when you have a number of hit singles you must be rolling in wealth.

DAMIEN: That you're stinking rich. But it was a good end for John. John got more money from

Undertones once we broke up. Because the deal was changed so that further publishing money would all be split to whoever wrote the song. So John ended up getting a lot of money for royalties, plus the last publishing deal we done 5 years ago, he got 20,000 pounds or something in advance, and I got 8,000 or something, and Mickey got 6,000. Feargal and Billy didn't get a penny. So he earned more money the last couple of years since we broke up.

JR: So that's why That Petrol Emotion has never split the songwriting credits.

DAMIEN: Well we always believed in writing down the credits on the records in The Undertones, 'cause that's what THE NEW YORK DOLLS used to do, it would say THUNDERS/SYLVAIN, so the Petrols are the same, but we never signed a publishing deal, to anybody, so it's still up for grabs. But it's more even. If we sign a deal which we'll have to soon, it'll be split to the songwriter. It's only fair, the songwriter did the work, he should get the money.

JR: It depends on how much everyone contributes. Some people write a song, but it isn't until the rest of the members play it that it's finished.

DAMIEN: True, obviously, there's a certain percentage split to everybody else as well. The majority of the money goes to the songwriter.

JR: Who does most of the research for the political literature on your records?

DAMIEN: Uh, everybody, who ever has the idea. John and Raymonde mostly.

JR: You just go to the library?

DAMIEN: Yes, you just get it out of books, there's so much literature like that in Ireland. It's incredible. They're all facts, like Amnesty International, we quote them, and things like that.

JR: That one from 100 years ago, though, that's a nice piece of research.

DAMIEN: Yeah, we take things from books as well, we just literally copy them out word for word. One or two we made up. Thing is now, John was the most political one, now he's gone, all of our new songs don't deal with politics at all, or Ireland. They do in a way, but not, less than in the past.

JR: How long have you lived here in London?

DAMIEN: Me? I moved at the end of The Undertones, just before we broke up. Everyone else has moved here since '84 or so.

JR: Do you think the distance between you and Derry has caused your political spirit to wane?

DAMIEN: No, no, no. Maybe a bit, but I still turn on the news everyday to hear what's happening in Ireland, I still read the newspapers. Plus my family keeps me up to date. I'm always interested in what's going on, it's kind of depressing. 'Cause nothing changes. It's scary, it's getting scary there at the moment, in the summer things are going to happen.

JR: Bloody Sunday actually occurred in Derry, right?

DAMIEN: I remember that vividly.

JR: You were about 10, right (1972)?

DAMIEN: Yes, about. I remember it well, because my parents asked me and my sister to go to that march. And we didn't go because football was on TV, and I wanted to watch Chelsea, that's my team. My parents went, and I remember hearing all the shooting. So I went to the top room, my bedroom, and looked down, the march was at a fair distance but you could see the people running. People falling, which was even more scary. It was like a half mile but you could see what was going on, down at the bog side. About an hour later my father came up white as a ghost, and he's going "Where's your mother?" He'd lost me mother, 'cause they were all running away from the bullets (fired by the British Army). I'd never seen him so scared. Anyway, he came back with her a half hour later, he'd found her. Luckily enough. But it always



1982: "THE LOVE PARADE" (EMI UK)



1983: "GOT TO HAVE YOU BACK" (EMI UK)



1983: "CHAIN OF LOVE" (EMI UK)



1986: "SAVE ME" (EMI UK)

remains in my memory, because, you know, they got away with it (the British), they killed 14 people, mostly all 17 year olds shot in the back.

JR: They've been getting away with it for 500 years.

DAMIEN: Yeah, but that was the most recent real atrocity, it's not that long ago, just 17 years. And they never talk about it here (in London) of course. (his voice rising) It'll be interesting to see if in '92 if there's even going to be an anniversary thing in the papers here.

JR: MARGARET THATCHER has banned the use of the term "I.R.A." in the papers here, hasn't she?

DAMIEN: Yeah. Well, you can't ban mentioning them, you can't do that. She's banned quoting them. On TV especially, which makes a farce out of democracy, doesn't it?

JR: They can't see that's as much censorship as the SALMON RUSHDIE affair, who they're hiding?

DAMIEN: Yeah! Oh yeah. It's even more sinister, what they can get away with here. 'Cause it's more hypocrisy, since we call ourselves a democratic country (as opposed to Iran).

JR: And yet there are no protests for this ban like there are, justifiably, in the Rushdie matter.

DAMIEN: No. There was local elections in Northern Ireland. The reason they put this ban in is to make them lose support among Catholics. But their support has just about stayed the same, so it hasn't even worked. It just another propaganda thing for the I.R.A.!

JR: That stuff always backfires. To what degree does BOBBY SANDS continue to inspire the Irish?

DAMIEN: Well, OK, the actual fact is that 10 men, not just Sands, died of hunger in the hunger strike for the right to be called "political prisoners." The right not to have to wear prison clothes and be branded a criminal. The fact that they have to go to that extreme says a lot about the willpower of Irish people. Irish Catholics, and the I.R.A. as well. All around the world, that was a scary period. For The Undertones as well, we were starting to get involved, we felt very strongly about this, and "It's Going To Happen" was originally about the hunger strikers, just before he died. "It's going to happen all the time," 'cause Irish history is full of hunger strikers and people dying. Anyway, the original words, I did them, and they were really corny, really obvious. So Mickey changed them, he made it into just a pop song. Regrettably now. But we did Top of The Pops the night before Bobby Sands died, and I wanted everyone to wear a black armband. They all chickened out at the last minute except for me. So I've got the video, I'm wearing the black armband on Top of The Pops. But nobody noticed it.

JR: Was that the only political statement Undertones ever made?

DAMIEN: No, Positive Touch as well, there's a song called "You're Welcome," which isn't political, it's more like a friend of ours was in (sounds like)

Long Kesh, which is an I.R.A. prison, he'd just gotten out after 5 years for explosives charges. So it's like a welcome back to civilization in a way. And "This Crisis of Mine" was John, writing about his dilemma about writing about Northern Ireland.

JR: What do you think of the new "Belfast Child" by SIMPLE MINDS.

DAMIEN: I've never heard the song, I don't want to!

JR: What about something like "Invisible Sun" by THE POLICE?

DAMIEN: That was better. That got banned here (in England), can you believe it? Typical. Actually, the song didn't, but the video did, with all the tanks and stuff. It was #1. STING, for being the wanker that he is, give him a bit of credit. At least he's politically aware. His wife was from Northern Ireland and obviously he knew about the history of Ireland, at least they tried something there, for being a massive pop group. That was a good song, I like it.

JR: What about the PAUL McCARTNEY song "Give Ireland Back to The Irish," and JOHN LENNON's "The Luck of The Irish" and "Bloody Sunday?"

DAMIEN: Yes, those too. And there's "Dance Dance" by DEXY's, which is a great statement on Northern Ireland as well. There they mention a lot of famous Irish authors. There it's like KEVIN ROWLAND is saying "How dare you call the Irish people stupid." It's a great, intelligent way to do it. I would have loved to have written that song.

JR: You used that for a cartoon on one of your sleeves, with the comedian saying "There were these thick paddies..."

DAMIEN: Yeah, it's true, it's like Polish jokes in America. Or whatever. Over here it's Irish jokes, despite all the great literate artists. Our law treats Irish as 2nd class citizens here, it's just the same as blacks and Pakistani people, it's just the British snobbery, they still think they're the elite. They still have this empire mentality. Thatcher is a result of this mentality, she's not in power for nothing. People want to be proud to be British again, and all this crap (a page of Reagan/Bush book). It's the same as America, as you know.

JR: Anything you want to say in conclusion, anything you want people to know? A completely open question. Here's your 5 minutes to say something.

DAMIEN: Well. None. Nothing really. Petrols have yet to make our finest LP which hopefully will be our next one. We should be recording in July so it won't be out 'til October at least. It's got to be out this year, otherwise we'll be totally lost (it wasn't released until spring 1990!). I'm cynical as ever about the music business though. I've been through what, 5 majors or something, and they're all the same. Bunch of wankers, but we know that already. Oh, actually 4, Sire/WEA,

EMI, Polydor, Virgin.

JR: You're running out of them pretty soon. You haven't hit up CBS yet.

DAMIEN: I'm pissed off over here, there aren't many good groups over here anymore, everyone's looking to America again. 'Cause that's where groups like PIXIES and SONIC YOUTH are coming out, stuff that's refreshing. Whereas over here, MY BLOODY VALENTINE are great, but you can count them on your fingers, there's not that many.

JR: Even the rap and acid house thing, which I hate?

DAMIEN: Yeah, I noticed your articles, and I disagree with some of that. I really like TON LOC, that kind of rap, where it's not really vulgar or harsh, or egotistical, like how big's my cock. You have a very valid reason there to complain about that. No, well, all this aside, nothing's happening here, and the music business is crap, but I'm still sticking at music because I love it.

SOCIAL DISTORTION



SOCIAL DISTORTION interview (Part 1, transcribed by Jack Rabid)

MIKE NESS was interviewed in an Epic conference room on March 13, 1990. It seemed strange to be talking with an old acquaintance I've always spoken to at clubs in this stuffy, impersonal, spotless, cold conference room, like Mickey Rourke in *Barfly* in the mansion, the "gilded cage." But that's the story, an unusual one at that; After years of waiting for a punk band to sign to a major without changing their sound and to a lesser extent, their look (Dickies in '78-'80 were the last one, but they're a special case), here is one, and it took them a decade to do it. Social Distortion's new self-titled 3rd LP, their first for Epic, could easily appeal to fans of their first LP '83's *Mommy's Little Monster*. With majors signing radical independent talent they once scorned, the times they are a changing, and Social Distortion's signing is not the shocking event it would have been even 3 years ago. In fact, that it isn't surprising, and may be less surprising than the signings of many others, may be the clearest indication of how different the majors' attitude towards primary independent music is these days. This may be good or bad: For some it will help them break out of the narrow confines of a rigid and suspicious smalltime independent scene. Others will be helpless little fish floundering in the gigantic uncaring pond.

At least in Social Distortion's case, they're no Johnny come latelys. With two indie albums, *Mommy's* and '88's *Prison Bound*, 3 indie singles, and numerous U.S. tours, they've survived 11 years

watching their contemporaries give up their instruments. In particular, the conversion of the punk scene to hardcore and thrash hasn't hurt them, both because of their veteran status and because their more recent LPs have had a larger appeal beyond that scene, with elements of country and blues added to their straight 4/4. They're a rock 'n' roll band, pure and simple, like a modern early Rolling Stones, who they've covered three times already.

The current lineup, more or less their third, has existed for 6 years, since 1/2 of the *Mommy's* lineup quit. Ness seems happier than any time previously, the renewed energy of a long reformed drug addict/alcoholic who's making up for lost time, with a combination of caution (his past is still part of him) and more humility than the Joe Cool punk star he once was. He seems more gracious, more interested, and more relaxed. Yet on stage he retains the charisma, looks, and intent that made him one of the best and most popular.

Thanks to Mike, Greg Fasolino and Lisa Markowitz.

JR: A good question to start off with is, aside from the date you did at Montana Studios, a private showcase for your new label, Epic, why didn't you didn't play New York on your last tour?

MIKE: You know what, we weren't able to book something, I don't remember exactly what the reasons were. There was something, at the time slot we had there was just nothing available. Maybe we booked the tour late. We're touring again in April, we'll definitely play New York this time. I'd like to play the Ritz again. (They played at Marquee instead)

JR: Maybe not a hardcore bill this time.

MIKE: Right! We're trying to get away from that really. You know, that digs up a whole issue with me. What the hell, what is hardcore? I mean, it's something we got labeled, I'd like to meet the guy who thought of that. What does it mean, that you sing fast? Does it mean you have a bald head? Does it mean you're extreme? I think of pornography when I think of hardcore. That's just my problem, but we're doing the same thing, we started before that, we were before the hardcore explosion. We were in the early days. I mean, when you were into punk it was THE PISTOLS and THE CLASH and GENERATION X and X-RAY SPEX, was that hardcore? What the hell's hardcore?

JR: Or THE WEIRDOS and the other U.S. bands.

MIKE: Yeah! THE GERMS and all that shit, what is hardcore? I don't understand. And another thing, what was punk 10 years ago, OK, I see bands that call themselves punk today, and if that's punk, I ain't got nothing to fucking do with it man. So, you know, it's changed, it's branched off into a lot of different areas, and I guess hardcore is one of them, one of the avenues, but I don't think that's a category we fall under.

JR: Do you think people group you that way from having seen the *Another State of Mind* movie on TV you were in 8 years ago? They see the younger, rawer Mike Ness and company, the old lineup?

MIKE: Yeah. Maybe hardcore is an attitude more than a style of music, I don't know. But we're just doing the same thing we always have been. Have you heard our new record (yes)? Do you like it?

JR: Sure, I play it a lot. What's there not to like about it? (laughs)

MIKE: I'm pretty happy with it. I really am. I was surprised.

JR: Did you have a weird trepidation from being on a major label for the first time?

MIKE: I had a lot of fears. Leaving a studio and a producer that we'd been comfortable working over

the years, into a big studio, and it's all plush and nice with a producer I didn't know. Yeah, there was a lot of worry there but all of that was worrying for nothing, 'cause the producer was totally cool and pretty much let us do our thing. We kept it simple, a fear of mine was over-production, coming out with something that was too slick. I think a lot of bands do that. One of the advantages of being on a major label is that things get done the way they're supposed to. Prison Bound took a year to record. It took 5 years to even get into the studio because of personal problems, but we did it all ourselves, and paid for it ourselves, and it took a fucking year to record. I don't even think **THE ROLLING STONES** take that long on an album. It was nice to go into a studio and do things right, having deadlines and meeting them. Having the artwork done before the record is, it's nice to have people working with you on something. That's a new concept for us, it used to be just us and the manager.

JR: What caused the delays on Prison Bound?

MIKE: Partly money. We had to play a show in L.A. and save all the money to give to the guy at the studio to put it out. That was when I was working full time, and a lot of the time I was too tired after work to go and fucking record. Or fights with the girlfriend, or whatever, there were all kinds of things. It was good to get that piece of vinyl out, 'cause it had been 5 years, I think it broke the ice for us. It's not my favorite record, but I think it served its purpose. It didn't sell near as many as our first album, and I have a feeling that this new one is going to sell more than either of them, but it got us back into the circuit, let people know that we're still around. It opened a lot of doors for us.

JR: It seemed like it finally put to rest the ghost of the more famous old Mommy's and "1945" lineup.

MIKE: Right. Which wasn't that...I think the relationship we have with the band members now is better than what we had before. You can get good musicians and you can sound really good, but if you're not friends...that would be a drag, rooming with someone I don't even fucking..., you know, we're really good friends and it helps.

JR: I remember that Cathay Du Grande New Years show in Hollywood in '83 into '84, the last show you ever did with that older lineup.

MIKE: Yeah, that was the last one. You were there?

JR: Yeah I was there, it was an aborted set, people were crashing into your equipment they were so drunk, the drums got knocked over, everything was just out of hand.

MIKE: Right. I don't remember what happened actually, I was pretty blacked.

JR: That was the best gig of that lineup I ever saw, I was so mad when the show got stopped midway, and then the next thing I heard, **BRENT** and **DERRICK** were out of the band.

MIKE: Really? Cool! At least we went out with a bang! I think there was something where I threatened to beat up Derrick and Brent for some reason, they did something that pissed me off and I was going to beat them up, and they just quit. Which was understandable. I was an asshole back then. But it all worked out for the better.

JR: I could see it coming as far back as that record release outdoor free gig you did at that parking lot behind that record store in Anaheim.

MIKE: Oh yeah, Pier Records. That was a fun show. Yeah, things were happening. But the lineup now gives me room to write, and they have trust in my judgment, and at the same time they throw their suggestions in too.

JR: Had you ever seen **THE LEWD** before you asked **CHRIS** to drum for you?



1983: MOMMY'S LITTLE
MONSTER(13th Floor)

1988: PRISON BOUND
(Restless/Enigma)

MIKE: I think so, I think we played with them at Frisco, I don't remember. I was preoccupied.

JR: I often wonder what happened to **(The Lewd's) J. SATS BERET** and **OLGA**.

MIKE: I know. I know. I wonder what happened to a lot of people man. I was just talking earlier to someone about it, it's pretty safe to say we're one of the only L.A. bands left from that era. I heard Bad Religion is still around, I heard their new album is really good. That's good to hear. but I heard **THE CIRCLE JERKS** just broke up, and I don't know what direction they were headed in, **KETTH**'s got fucking dreadlocks.

JR: **AGENT ORANGE** also seems to have disappeared at last, I hope not.

MIKE: Yeah, it's weird. I'm grateful...It's like that 5 year fog was supposed to happen. We recorded an album in '85 when I was in the midst of drugs and stuff, had we released that it would have threw us back.

JR: The same songs that ended up on Prison Bound?

MIKE: Yeah, a lot of left over junkie type songs, but you could never tell though! (laughs)

JR: Refugees from L.A.M.F. (**Thunders' Heartbreakers**), huh? (both laugh)

MIKE: Yeah, exactly. Same type of thing yeah. What's cool about the new album, is that they're all new songs, all from the last year or two, it's fresh man, you know what I mean? It's fresh and it's high energy. I'm more happy with this than anything we've ever done.

JR: Could you have predicted even three years ago that you'd find yourself on a major label? It seems momentous that suddenly majors have an interest in "alternative" music when there was no interest before; I never thought I'd see the day that Social Distortion would be signed without you changing your sound radically, which you haven't.

MIKE: I think I always had an interest. OK, it's like, for a while it wasn't cool to be successful. It was more underground. It wasn't cool to be in a limousine

JR: Why, have you been hanging out in limos now?

MIKE: No, no, They did pick me up at the airport in one, but that's the only time I've ever been in one. (both laugh)

JR: You must have felt pretty out of place!

MIKE: Oh yeah. You feel like a whore in church.

JR: I read that very phrase in a **JIM BOUTON** book once, Ball Four I think.

MIKE: But even back then, I feel like anyone who says they don't want to be successful in what they're doing is like saying you don't want to get a life. There were a lot of old blues guys who wouldn't play for money, and those are the really hardcore guys. But I've always wanted to become big, and I don't mean become rich. My terms of success is different than others. Some people's definition of success is being rich and famous and all that,

mine is just being comfortable. If it never gets any better than this, then that's OK.

JR: At least you've quit your other job and you're doing this full-time.

MIKE: Yeah, I'm doing something I enjoy, that's success. And we haven't had to make any compromises, it's fucking great man! If someone says Social Distortion sold out, then it's like "Tell me how?" OK? 'Cause we're still doing the same thing we were doing 10 years ago. Maybe the drum beat isn't as fast, (he plays on his knees) we used to call this the "forbidden beat" on the YOUTH BRIGADE tour. 'Cause that's when the whole hardcore scene was exploding, the "1-2-Fuck You" beat.

JR: The tempo and beat for "Mass Hysteria" (from the Somebody Got Their Head Kicked In compilation put out by B.Y.O. Records).

MIKE: Yeah, we had a couple of songs like that. Like "Anti-fashion." But some bands, that's like their whole set!

JR: I call that G.B.H. disease.

MIKE: Yeah! C'mon! I get a fucking headache. I don't know, you know as well as I do that Social Distortion has never been concerned with what's popular at the time. We started out in the late 70's with Germs, and FEAR, and Gen X and The Clash, and all that, but then the hardcore thing started and we were still doing what we were already doing, and now it's like the long hair and the glam and the speed metal, I'm not really concerned with all that. I'm just doing what I like, and hopefully someone else will like it.

JR: The only stylistic change I'm perceived you making was adding more blues and country to your old hard guitar sound.

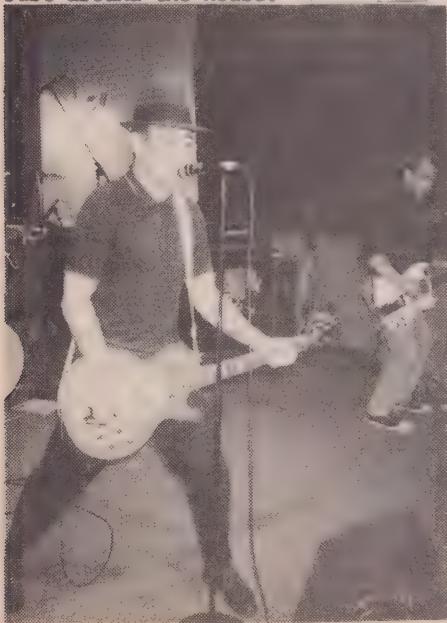
MIKE: Right, and stopped dying my hair. I'm grateful that we were able to stay consistent, I don't know what to attribute that to. Maybe my narrow-mindedness.

JR: Yeah, the review I saw of Prison Bound in Option seemed to think you were just rehashing your 1st LP, which I don't think is true.

MIKE: Yeah, I would tend to disagree, you like to think if you stay consistent for 10 years, you're going to learn to play your instruments. Like "Drug Train" or "Prison Bound" could never have appeared on the first album.

JR: Have you been listening to a lot of **JOHNNY CASH** and country people the last few years?

MIKE: I always have. I grew up with that stuff. I grew up with country, 'cause my Dad played guitar. Just around the house.



SOCIAL DISTORTION'S MIKE NESS (L, WITH HAT) AND DENNIS DANIEL AT MONTANA STUDIOS, NEW YORK CITY, AUGUST 25, 1989
(photo: Happy Jack Rabid)



1982: "1945" (13th Floor)



1981: "Mainliner" (Posh Boy)

JR: Let me try that Dad!

MIKE: Exactly. So it's weird, I got into the Glitter scene, I've been used to taking shit for the music I've been into my whole life. I was not listening to the music the kids on the block were listening to. My uncles were young, my uncle was a drummer in a garage band, and they were always turning me on to stuff, and he built Harleys and stuff, he was cool, he was a role model for me. He was like **MICKEY ROURKE** and I was like a kid. So he would turn me on to albums, I remember when the "Day Tripper" single by **THE BEATLES** came out, I was really only this high (gestures) and I hear that guitar (sings), and I thought, "Fuck man, that's tough!" (I used to think that about "Think For Yourself" at the same age! --ed) And then I got into **BOWIE** and all the other kids were into **ELTON JOHN** (oddly enough, Elton was always a big fan of punk rock in the late 70's!) and I remember when **KISS** came out, they were a great band, and they had a big influence on me. The melodic rhythms and then there was the early punk, which had the biggest influence on us.

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JR: You were hanging around the Fleetwood and Blackies and stuff.

MIKE: Oh yeah, absolutely, The 2nd Masque. The Starwood, The Whiskey, it was underground back then.

JR: You saw **THE GEARS** and bands like that?

MIKE: Sure, yeah, the Gears are a good example, they were a roots band I think. And then later on the blues and rockabilly type influences. It's got all these type of influences coming together in this one blend I think, and I think that's what makes Social Distortion kind of hard to categorize.

JR: Least of all hardcore! (laughs)... I haven't heard too many hardcore country bands.

MIKE: No. And if we lose some of our crowd by saying that, then fuck, that's due to their own narrow-mindedness.

JR: Most people who like punk will like your new LP, maybe the hardcores and thrashers won't. Certainly "So Far Away" would be liked by any of the old punk fans.

MIKE: Right. If they don't like that song, they didn't like "Mommy's Little Monster." So, that's cool.

JR: It's taken the public 15 years to realize that the Sex Pistols and The Clash were just rock 'n' roll bands anyway, albeit good ones, in a time when that was a rarity.

MIKE: Absolutely. Totally! **STEVE JONES**, everything he was doing was just a blues scale. Yeah, exactly! See that's the difference! The early punk stuff was musical! **BLONDIE** was great I thought, and **THE VIBRATORS**, and the fucking **HEARTBREAKERS**, what the hell is that?

JR: You won't get any argument from me there. **Live at Max's** is the essence of rock 'n' roll. Most hardcore bands I don't think have that rock 'n' roll intelligence in songwriting.



1983: "Another State of Mind" (13th Floor) 1990: "Let It Be Me" (Epic)

MIKE: Exactly, yeah. To me, that was punk, so you know, when you've grown up with that, and you hear... I don't want to name any names, but when you hear some screaming bald idiot (that would be a great name for a hardcore band, the Screaming Bald Idiots) yelling into a mike, it's just hard to relate to.

JR: You must have seen a lot of that in your days!
MIKE: Oh, yeah, I'm seen more than I care to. (laughs)

JR: I remember you got into a bad fight with some of those people in New York on that first tour in '82, a pack of those people were beating on you..

MIKE: Yeah, that was my own fault. That was due to my alcoholism and shit. It got me into a lot of trouble, bottom line, from day one my excessive drinking and drug abuse did nothing but get me in trouble. I don't know how we were able to keep a band together and build a draw, I guess that was in the early stages of it, it progressed, my illness.

JR: Quality music had something to do with it. I remember the one time I visited you in L.A. you got into a big screaming match with your sister over your brother.

MIKE: Really? Yeah, I was probably trying to get money from her. It's all changed now.

JR: That's kind of a continual subject for you in your lyrics too, isn't it? Like "Prison Bound" or "Drug Train" or especially "I Want What I Want."

MIKE: Yeah, I try not to overdo it, and I try to be subtle. 'Cause I don't want to be one of those guys who fucking preaches or anything, you know?

JR: Like Steve Jones doing those commercials. "Just say no!"

MIKE: It's not only the drug thing, but bands back then who were telling you what to do....bands that were trying to get you on the bandwagon, whether it was politics or drugs, it tends to be self-contradictory, because change is inevitable I think. There's no guarantee that I'll be clean in 5 years. I would like to think so, I'd like to think that I'll never go back to that lifestyle, but I'm certainly not going to be on the microphone yelling about junkies. I don't have anything against people who can do that, there's some people who can and some people who can't, I'm just one of those who can't.

JR: A friend of mine who's a big fan of yours, he's also a recovering alcoholic, he said a lot of the lyrics on the Prison Bound LP reminded him of his AA meetings, the things his counselors were saying.

MIKE: Yeah. Yeah. Not so much counselors, but people like us. (declines to answer more)

JR: How about DENNIS, how have you gotten along with him over the years through all the changes.

MIKE: Really good. He stuck by me the whole time even in the midst of the hell, over the years our relationship has just gotten better. He's gone through changes himself, it's all about growing up I guess. As you get older, hopefully, you start to mature and look at life differently. The things

that used to excite me, don't really excite me any more. And the things I used to put down as being square or not cool, I find myself doing.

JR: For instance?

MIKE: Well, I've got a rose garden at my pad. And I take a date to a nice dinner and a movie, I put on a long sleeve shirt (which, incidentally, means that his dozens of tattoos on his arms are covered!). I go to my cousin's two little girls' birthday parties man, with cake and ice cream, 'cause I want to participate in life today. That's just normal shit normal people have been doing their whole lives, see? But, somewhere along the line I got sidetracked.

JR: You were doing the bad boy trip.

MIKE: Yeah, exactly. It was all unnecessary. It was all supposed to happen that way.

JR: Are you still adding tattoos to your collection?

MIKE: Yeah. Absolutely.

JR: (bemused) Do you have any space left? (laughs)

MIKE: Yeah. I'm going to have to start collaging it all together now. Make it all look like one big sleeve. Then I'll go onto my chest and back. It's fun.

JR: Was "She's a Knockout" about anyone in particular?

MIKE: No, not that song, a couple of the others seem to have influences of romance, past girlfriends and stuff, but that one is more of the lustful nature.

JR: Everybody knows one.

MIKE: Right, I see them every day. If you're a girl watcher. I know I am.

JR: Who isn't.... The chords to "It Could Have Been Me" seem borrowed from "Folsom Prison Blues."

MIKE: Yeah, it's the same, I don't know if it's 4 bar, 8 bar, or 12 bar, but it's a blues progression. Yeah. E-A-B. It's been done a million, billion, trillion times. Same chords, blues, the same chords in all the blues songs, it's used a lot. So you take that, but you can do so much with the vocals that are different.

JR: Who do you see yourself playing with these days? Now that you're getting away from the punk thing.

MIKE: Well, we're doing one more headlining tour, this April and May, of the States, a ten week ballbuster, and we're hoping to do a support tour in the Summer with JOAN JETT. I think that would be good for us. It would be really compatible. She likes our band, we like her band. I think it would be good exposure for us, as far as playing for crowds that would have never seen us if we were headlining in some bar downtown.

JR: You like her albums? I don't.

MIKE: Yeah, I like them. My favorite one is the one with "I Love Rock 'n' Roll" on it.

JR: Oh, the GARY GLITTER cover.

MIKE: Yeah. I haven't heard the new one yet. I just got the tape. I like the BLACKHEARTS, I like the RUNAWAYS. They're just one of the bands that had a part in influencing us.

JR: Did you ever hear that story about her just supposedly sleeping on the couch in a stoned stupor while she was supposed to be producing the GERMS' LP? (their only LP, back in '79)

MIKE: Probably. Yeah. Probably.

JR: What other plans do you have these days?

MIKE: I'm going to go home and work on my car. I bought a '55 Pontiac before I left. It's got the more rounded fins like a '55 Caddy, it doesn't have the sharp ones like the '59, but it's big, it's cool man. It's getting painted right now, two tone black and white. Like a police car. I'll be driving it a lot, it's got a brand new motor in it.

JR: I can imagine what kind of mileage it'll get.

MIKE: Fuck, the kid I bought it off, some rockabilly kid, and he put a hot rod, a 69-420 in it. It's

bitchin. It's just pretty cool having hobbies now. A lot of things I can do that I couldn't do before 'cause I was chasing the bag.

THE HOUSE OF LOVE

HOUSE OF LOVE interview (Part 1, Transcribed by Jack Rabid)

GUY CHADWICK was interviewed in a Polygram conference room on Lincoln's birthday, February 12, 1990. He was in town doing interviews for the band's first ever U.S. tour, which commenced May 15 in Wash D.C.

A large-scale bio is not necessary since most of the band's history is discussed in the interview itself. Named after a controversial book by **ANALIS NIN**, this London band had always consisted of songwriter Chadwick on guitar/vocals, **TERRY BICKERS** on 2nd guitar, **CHRIS GROOTHUIZEN** on bass, and **PETER EVANS** on drums, until December '89, when Bickers left and was replaced by **SIMON WALKER**.

Until then, things had been fairly smooth sailing for a group that had risen steadily to the top of the indie scene through three years of hard work, excellent singles, and finally an acclaimed self-titled debut album, all for the renowned Creation label. The split was indicative of the problems that beset the group when they signed a lucrative contract with Fontana/Polygram, and began work on the 2nd LP, releasing the "Never" single which was poorly received by UK critics and many fans. Like so many other U.K. groups over the years, House of Love were the recipients of a backlash bashing in the press to compensate for the original over-hype (we build you up and we knock you down), thus adding to the pressure felt by the band sequestered in the studio. Much of the frustrations are covered in the following chat, one of the most hair-pulling 2nd album sessions in recent memory!

Strangely enough, despite all the restarts, doubts, and discarded sessions, the 2nd LP (also self-titled) turned out to be a masterwork (see record reviews), so much better than their fine debut it's amazing! "Never" is included, but 3 other songs have also been lifted for singles, the first of which, "I Don't Know Why I Love You" went top 10 in the UK, their first hit, as well as "Shine On" (a new version of their first ever single on Creation 4 years ago) and "Beatles and Stones." The group has been touring constantly, including two long tours of little England, and will still be in the midst of their 6 week US tour by the time you read this. In British interviews, Chadwick has bristled when called (as his own Polygram press kit does!) "an overnight sensation;" rightly asserting that the group has been working steadily for years, with hundreds of live shows.

Thanks to Guy, Lydia Sherwood, and Marty Maidenberg.

JR: Is this your first time in America?

GUY: Yes.

JR: See much?

GUY: No, I haven't been very well actually. I've got this infection in my sinuses, so I've sort of been staying in bed as much as possible. I went to a radio station in Asbury Park last night and I've had meetings. There won't be much time to look around.

JR: Too bad.

GUY: Well, yeah, but I'm not a great tourist. Though I like traveling I just like to take in places.

JR: You're used to doing interviews by yourself, aren't you?

GUY: Yeah, I do them all.

JR: Tell me about your days as a solo artist before House of Love.

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GUY: I was a solo artist for most of the time I was on RCA. I started out with a group called **THE KINGDOMS** and we had a single out that didn't do anything called "Heartland" (no relation to the song of the same name by The Sound).

JR: How long was there in between. I know you had a job as a driver there for a while.

GUY: I think a year and a half.

JR: Had you assumed that you'd quit forever? Get a normal job and forget the music business?

GUY: Yeah, well I didn't know what I was going to do, I actually thought of working in the music business but I don't know. Now I don't have to consider it, you know.

JR: Fortunately.

GUY: 'Cause I'm doing what I want to do and what I always wanted to do. But I did reach a point where I just thought what I did and what I write about and how I approach music doesn't make sense on a contemporary level. So I just got really frustrated. But then I started writing again, songs that have become very popular for us like "Christine" and "Shine On" and "Destroy the Heart," a lot of tracks, I wrote them all in 1985. At the end of the year I'd written 10 songs that I thought were really good and I didn't know why I was writing them, and demoing them. Try again, have one last go at it, get a group together that's serious.

JR: Did the band fall into place easily from the demos, after you made them?

GUY: Yeah, I had a really strong idea of how I wanted it to sound. Really it sounds exactly how I wanted it to when I started thinking about it five years ago. It's remarkable, it works! Although I had a good idea, a specific idea of how the sound of the records were going to be, I wanted it to be a group, and I wanted the people in the group to be totally into it as well, totally relate to it. So it would always be a forceful idea, of four people putting themselves into this idea, not just one guiding 3 others.

JR: Whereas The Kingdoms were just thrown together?

GUY: Well, I've always been a writer stroke composer, I've always written a whole song with a clear idea of how it's going to sound, not just a track on an acoustic. I suppose House of Love is the first time I actually got it right.

JR: How did it differ?

GUY: A different time, really. Just a different time. Probably not much in some aspects, very different in others, it was just a different period. It's difficult to be objective about your own thing.

JR: How about the guitar sounds, is this a progression? You have a unique sound now.

GUY: I always played guitar, but I didn't really start experimenting with the sounds 'til 1985, specifically with effects. I found a particular sound that really, really seemed to work for me.

1988: THE HOUSE OF
LOVE (Relativity)



1990: THE HOUSE OF
LOVE (2)(Polygram)





1987: "Shine On" (back) (Creation UK)



1987: "Real Animal" (Creation UK)



1988: "Christine" (Creation UK)

1988: "Destroy The Heart" (Creation UK)

And I didn't think, "God, nobody's using this sound," I don't think it's simple as that, it just seemed to work with the sound of my voice. I'd never been a guitarist, I always assumed I wasn't good enough even though I played one and wrote on one, to be the guitarist in a group. I developed a bit of confidence and began to articulate better.

JR: Did TERRY write any of his parts?

GUY: No, nothing, not really at all. He's just a great performer, he has a nice touch. He's put some good things in our records, but it was more sort of atmospheric additions. He's not a "part" writer. He's not a composer. I can structure guitar parts myself. I like playing a chord six different ways and tuning a string so it makes a different ring to it, that's something I'm good at. But I'm not a live guitarist, I don't enjoy playing live, I can't communicate on stage. I just like to have take after take after take and do it in the studio. And that's why I need a really good live guitarist in the group.

JR: You must be looking forward to recording with SIMON in the group then.

GUY: We've just done some, about 6 or 7 tracks last week, we just went into the studio and recorded them very quickly and they sounded brilliant. I wrote 3 in the studio like that. The vibe is back in the group completely. It's really happening again, it's great.

JR: Will you release them?

GUY: Well, they were going to be b-sides, we're going to do that with 4 of them. But the other 2 are too good to be extra tracks so we're holding them back, we'll consider them as demos for the next album. Simon is really good in the studio, better than Terry, much more concise, follows the song a lot better, really aggressive style, seems to cut it. I wasn't sure beforehand, but he really cuts it in the studio, he understands dynamics really well.

JR: He was a mate of yours before he joined, right?

GUY: Actually he was more friends with Terry than he was with me (Jack laughs). I never used to like him very much! I always thought he was a pain in the ass, 'cause he's so arrogant and "this is the way it is." But I'd always known him and I'd always admired his playing.

JR: What was the band he was in?

GUY: DAVE HOWARD SINGERS. Canadian, Dave Howard is. A talented guy. He's got a small cult following in London, he's going to play with us on our English tour, some dates, like at Albert Hall in March.

JR: That's a pretty big gig for you, isn't it?

GUY: Yeah, we were going to do it last year. 'Cause we did 6 nights at the ICA then instead, I didn't feel we were ready to play there last year, that would be arrogant, so we did the 6 small shows

instead, not charge as much money. It's not that big.

JR: I saw Corn Dollies there in May, it only holds a two or three hundred I'd say (a far cry from Albert Hall). But the Albert Hall is prestigious.

GUY: It is. It's a very dangerous gig to do. For a start you lose money, you can't make money playing there unless you charge like 15 quid (25 bucks) for a ticket. And we're not in a position where we can justify paying that kind of money to see us. Acoustically it's hard to get a good sound.

JR: Did you see Bunnymen, Banshees, Aztec Camera or any of the old timers there?

GUY: I've never been there. It's just one of those places, HENDRIX played there, THE STONES played there, it's just this icon of venues.

JR: And it's a hell of a lot bigger than I.C.A.!

GUY: Well the ICA is...we were the first group to do that, play a whole week of shows, 'cause you have to justify that on an art level. It's the Institute of Contemporary Arts, you can't just book in and play there. You've got to have a good art reason. People thought we were really pretentious for playing there, but I thought it worked really well.

JR: They all sold out two months in advance too, if I recall.

GUY: We have a big, big audience now, there wasn't a question of it selling out, it was a question of how it was perceived. And because we have been and are closely scrutinized by the British Press you have to be careful what you do.

JR: Was it you who tried to get THE ONLY ONES to open one of the shows? They were even advertised. what happened to them!

GUY: We tried to. And then what happened was, PETER PERRETT phoned up the office two days before the shows, and he said, "I've changed my mind, I want the House of Love to be my backing band." And we just said no. We were on tour, what do you expect us to do? He just proved to be too unreliable.

JR: Once a junkie, always a junkie?

GUY: Apparently. I don't know though, I've never met him (in interviews Perrett talks openly about his "former" addiction).

JR: You're an old fan of his though, right?

GUY: I used to be a fan. I still am in a sense, kind of grew out of him a bit, though they made a big impression on me at the time. But House of Love are much different.

JR: Ever hear the JOHNNY THUNDERS LP Perrett played on back then, So Alone?

GUY: No, I'm not particularly drawn to Johnny Thunders. To be honest that whole sort of New York late 70's scene doesn't register with me at all, I've never investigated it, I keep meaning to, NEW YORK DOLLS, etc. I used to be a big RAMONES fan.

JR: TALKING HEADS were great back then too.

GUY: Oh yeah, I'm a big fan of theirs too. I think some TELEVISION stuff is good too, I think "Marquee Moon" is a classic guitar track.

JR: Why does everyone dump on "Never" as if it was the worst thing they'd ever heard in their lives. It's not that bad.

GUY: I don't dump on it. It wasn't a good time for us, and it wasn't what people were expecting. It wasn't going to be an English single, it never was. It got a lot of airplay and it sold quite well, but it didn't get into the top 40 like people expected. I like it, it sounds good on the album.

JR: Seems like people took out their frustration on it 'cause you'd jumped to a major label.

GUY: Yeah, I don't know. We've only just recently crossed over in England, we've suddenly crossed over to 7" sales, I don't know if it's the same in America. The 2 singles were released last year, mostly sold as 12"s, the 2 b-sides of "Never" were 2 of the best we'd ever done. "Safe" I wish was on our new album. Because that was on the "Never" single, we thought it was a good release, but people didn't notice it, they're so obsessed with "the single." We spend so much effort on extra tracks for our singles so that when fans do buy them they want to hear what else you're up to. When we do gigs a lot of people call out for b-sides. Always happens. (Sorry folks, I forgot to ask about House of Love's scurrilous practice of putting out the single in varying formats with varying b-sides, meaning a dedicated fan often has to buy 3-4 copies of the same single to possess all released tracks! I'd meant to question him about the seeming unfairness of this habit, which is meant to boost sales so that the record charts, at the expense of the most dedicated of fans, but it sadly slipped my mind. My apologies.)

JR: In fact, I've often thought the SMITHS/MORRISSEY b-sides have been better than their great a-sides!

GUY: Yeah! And they ended up having a hit single with an old b-side didn't they! ("How Soon is Now" was originally the b-side, 12" only of "William it Was Really Nothing.")

JR: Yes, and that seems to be happening with STONE ROSES now. No one seems to be mentioning that "Fools Gold" is actually the b-side of that new single, the a-side is "What the World is Waiting For!"

GUY: Yeah, they probably need to do that. (laughs at his joke) No, they're going to have to go through the same syndrome we did last year, having to come out with a 2nd album, and they've been together for a long time, that group, and that first LP is a culmination of 5 or 6 years work. When you try to follow that up and you haven't got 5 or 6 years to come up with a 2nd album, it's really hard and they'll find it difficult.

JR: Will they be as neurotic as House of Love was doing theirs?

GUY: They're really together. A really together band. They've got a really good attitude. I'm actually a big fan of theirs, I think they're a really good band. I saw them loads of times last year, a few months before you saw them (we'd chatted about the Dingwalls show in May), I saw them at Powerhaus (in Islington), and they played the I.C.A.

JR: I tried to see the I.C.A. gig, but it was the night after I arrived, and it was already sold out, of course. Do you get tired of being endlessly compared to DAVID GEDGE of WEDDING PRESENT and MORRISSEY?

GUY: I just don't relate to it. People can write what they like, I don't really care, people are entitled to their own opinion. All I can say is I don't have any real empathy for someone like

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Morrissey and I come from a completely different background than David Gedge, but I might be the same as David Gedge, I like him. He's a nice guy, and I think the sentiments of the group are really good, but I don't see any comparison between the Wedding Present and House of Love or David and myself, and he wouldn't either.

JR: Another tendency of the British Press?

GUY: Yeah, 'cause they're English. They're British, it's just the nature of British people, they're just obsessed with ghettoizing and pigeonholing people and it's just the way it is, it's the way it always has been. It's not even worth getting cynical about, it's probably the way it will always be. Fashion; it's such a small country, and fashion is so important, everyone is playing peacock. I've never related to it, I can't understand it. I've never been anti-fashion, but I've never tried really to sort of incorporate fashion into what I do, when I have on occasion it's been disastrous. It's something I steer clear of as a rule.

JR: The photos on your sleeves are taken by your girlfriend, right?

GUY: Yeah, she's a really inventive photographer.

JR: The new one for "Shine On" is taken in Barcelona right? (or so Caroline surmised)

GUY: (surprised) Yes, in a park. Amazing place, isn't it.

JR: Great place for a photo shoot.

GUY: Yeah! We didn't have enough time actually. We could have done some better stuff, but we were doing a gig there and we had about a half hour or hour to kill. There was some really great stuff we were going to use, but then Terry left the group, so we had all this stuff with Terry in it that we couldn't use any more! So that was that really.

JR: When did you decide to take such a tour of small towns England (the tour they'd just completed, a novel idea few if any successful bands have done)

GUY: Well I didn't, it was the manager's idea and it was a good idea. How are we going to sort of re-enter the marketplace and make sense to people who have stuck with us, and yet at the same time not do what is normally expected? How can we get people to re-identify with us after being away for a year? How can we get our feet back on the ground? 'Cause the thing about being fairly successful and being away from touring and being away from the limelight, is it's very easy to become deluded and assume that everything's on. Yet we knew we needed to get back. Doing that tour did just that. The tour started, and it wasn't selling out, we had to accept the fact that a lot of people had gone off the band because in many ways we'd deserted them.

JR: Typical elitism. You signed to a major so you're not cool anymore.

1989: "Never"
(Phonogram UK)

1989: "I Don't Know
Why I Love You"



LTD EDITION
4483

The House Of Love
I don't know why i love you

GUY: Yeah, but by the middle of that tour, and we were really working hard, it started to click and this vibe went round, and the press was really good. By the end of the tour, January, every gig was selling out and we just got back. People were traveling a long way to see us, from cities to small towns.

JR: Slough? And nobody plays in Oldham when they can play in Manchester instead.

GUY: Yeah, finally it was really cooking, it was really throb, and they were great gigs, we got it back again. So now we've set it up to go back and do this traditional city tour next month. And it's gonna sell out, big venues. We're back on course and it's great. It cost some though. We lost Terry. A lot of that was just that tour, it was so grueling, but that's the story of our life next year, just constant touring, and it's hard, it takes a lot out of you mentally.

JR: Wait 'til you hit America and the 8 hour drives.

GUY: Yeah, I know. Touring Europe, the continent is similar. 8 hour drives every day. Just tired all the time. Does you in, but if you're together enough and you want to sort of do it, and you want to communicate with an audience you can do it, but it's hard work. You've got to be careful on the excess side.

JR: Do you have a better viewpoint on the pop music scene 'cause you're a little older than most of your contemporaries? Do you have a better understanding of how the whole process works? How to handle the press and marketing, etc. It sounds like you give it a lot of consideration.

GUY: Yeah, I'm pretty together on that side. I used to be really together but I used to have more time. The knack is to make sure that the people you employ are people that you trust and can make the right decisions. It has gotten to that point where it's become very difficult to become personally involved in details like getting videos together, the right people to do that, and sleeves and studios.

JR: Those studio decisions gave you headaches last year it seems.

GUY: Yeah, they did. It was a new area, and we were just below the point of breaking. We weren't right on the cusp of it, we were right below it. It was very easy to get disillusioned and debilitated in a way. Now we've crossed over that point. Last year it was hard, at the end of the day I didn't know what kind of record I wanted to make.

JR: How many producers and studios are we talking here (laughs)?

GUY: Well the LP was comprised of 4 sessions in various studios. We started off the beginning of the year doing two tracks with **TIM PALMER**, we did "Shine On" and "Never," which we weren't very happy with. Then we did two tracks with **STEVEN HAGUE** and they didn't work out either. That was a great disappointment. I think he's a very talented guy, but he was working with the group at a really difficult time and it wasn't easy for him. No way was it his fault, we gave him a really hard time. I wasn't strong enough, and sure enough about how things should be, so it was a constant clash. And then after that we did a six week session with a guy called **PAUL O'DUFFY** at Abbey Road in Studio 2 where **THE BEATLES** did all their stuff and that was a complete disaster, there was only one track that was usable and did go on the album, that was "The Hedonist." And by that time, things were looking really, really bad, we'd spent thousands and thousands of pounds and Phonogram just thought "What have we got ourselves involved with."

JR: They spent a lot just signing you!

GUY: Yes, just the original investment in the group



1990: "Shine On"



1990: "Beatles and Stones" (PhonogramUK)

was enough, but the investment in recording was getting colossal. And they just said, "Right, do you want us to put out this Abbey Road stuff?" and I said "What do you think?" 'cause they knew what I thought, and they just said "It's crap. (Jack laughs), but we'll put it out if you want us to." And I said "No, please, just give us one more chance!" And we'd worked with this guy **DAVE MEAGHAM**, we'd done a couple of slow ballads with him that had worked out beautiful, but Phonogram said "This is soft stuff, and you're a rock band, you need a rock producer." We discovered him when we were working with Steven Hague, he was his engineer, we'd liked him, he'd worked with a lot of bands we'd liked, and he liked the same music as us. He worked with **JIMMY PAGE** and I'm a big Jimmy Page fan, certain **LED ZEPPELIN** tracks I think are absolutely fantastic.

JR: I'm more enamored with his **YARDBIRDS** days.

GUY: So we went into a studio with him to do the album and it worked.

JR: Where was this?

GUY: A studio called I Vision in the West End. Lots of good records from there.

JR: Why did you decide to re-record "Shine On"? Were you sad that the original was just an indie single, your debut?

GUY: Uh, it never really happened as an independent single. You know, I never wanted to release it as our first record in the first place, that was **ALAN McGEE** (Creation records boss, still working with the band's management), he insisted it should be first. I always wanted to save it until there was some momentum in the group. It's a pop song, I always knew it could potentially do well in the world market. It's a good track, good chorus, good riffs...But it is a pop song, it's not a radical sort of statement. It was always going to get us more fans. Ultimately, I want the band to appeal to as many people as possible.

BAD RELIGION

BAD RELIGION interview (Part 1, transcribed by Rabid)
(Note: About 1/40th of this interview appeared in **Reflex** magazine)

Singer **GREG GRAFFIN** and guitarist **BRETT GUTTEREZ** (or Mr. Brett as he's been calling himself lately) were interviewed at West Beach Recording, Brett's recording studio, in Hollywood, California, on January 2, 1990. Brett was in the midst of mixing a hardcore band, and graciously took time out from this session to sit for the interview with Greg, who drove from his home. That week, the band had just released their 4th LP **No Control**, so there isn't as much of a discussion of their new work



BAD RELIGION's GREG GRAFFIN (L) AND MR. BRETT (GUREWITZ) AT BRETT'S WEST BEACH RECORDING STUDIO, JANUARY 2, 1990 (photo: Jack Rabid)

as there would be had this session occurred a month or so later. But there's much to talk about anyway!

Bad Religion formed around 1980 in the Valley section of L.A., a group of high school teen-agers in their first band. Their first record was a self-titled 7" 6 song EP, released, as has every record they've put out, on their own label Epitaph Records. Several gigs (including a memorable one supporting The Damned in '82 at Godzillas in the Valley) led to the release of their debut LP, an acknowledged classic of the early 80's So-Cal punk explosion, '82's How Could Hell Be Any Worse, with a photo of Hollywood on the cover in case you couldn't figure out what they were referring to. The record outsold just about every non-Dead Kennedy hardcore/punk LP of the time, and with tracks on the Someone Got Their Head Kicked In compilation and the Public Service comp., they'd established themselves as one of the best bands on the peaking punk circuit, raising expectations for the followup, '83's Into The Unknown. To the shock of those who purchased it, however, the LP was as far from punk as imaginable, bearing more of a resemblance to mainstream rock; many reviews compared it to Steve Miller Band and Journey, thanks to the overuse of cliched synthesizer solos throughout the record. The LP produced one of the most extreme reactions of hatred ever witnessed in the fanzine world, as publication after publication spewed invective. The group also seemed finished; bassist JAY and drummer PETE had dropped out before the 2nd LP was recorded, and now Graffin was headed to Wisconsin to attend college (a drawing of the state appears on that LP), and their old fans seemed to want them to quit anyway. However, the truth is that misled production values aside, the songs themselves were quite good, and taken as a rock LP rather than as a punk band's 2nd LP, it really was quite a good work, with pardonable indulgences. Certainly "Chasing The Wild Goose" and "It's Only Over When" rank among their finest songs, though Bad Religion aren't likely to agree. For the most part they disowned it, as was evidenced by their next release.

The title of '85's comeback EP said it all. Recorded during a break from Graffin's education, Back to The Known brought Bad Religion back to the punk fold, led by new guitarist GREG HETSON, who had been playing 2nd guitar with them live off and on since the early days, and who was on loan from

his own band **CIRCLE JERKS**. "Yesterday" and "Frogger" set the tone of what was to come in more recent times, straight out adrenalin rushes, yet not as fast as most thrash and with great songwriting. The other 3 tracks seem like outtakes from that beleaguered 2nd LP only devoid of the syths and processed vocals, perhaps the three best tracks of their career to date, since it melded the best of the styles of the first 2 LPs. This is ironic since, as this interview reveals, that had been their intention on that 2nd LP! Strange!

The band wasn't heard of again until '87, when the band reassembled on a more permanent basis, college over, everyone settled into life in their 20's. They played regularly in L.A., and managed to re-recruit all the original members for the first time since the first LP, with Hetson now ensconced on 2nd guitar as a full member. 1988 brought Suffer, with its startling array of speedy songs and unusual lyrics (many of which even the best educated person would be forced to look up), their fastest most intense LP ever! (until the new one) It also brought them to the East Coast for their first proper tour here, including great dates at CBGB, The Pipeline in Newark, and Trenton's City Gardens.

1989 meant a triumphant Summer tour of Europe, their largest base of fan support outside of L.A., the recordings that produced No Control, and a support slot with **BUZZCOCKS** in November at the Santa Monica Civic Center. Which brings us to this interview. Having seen them the week before headlining a big show at Reseda's Country Club in the valley, an equipment breakdown and slam-marred hardcore fest (see L.A. section), the conversation begins with a discussion about the things observed at that show and about the Suffer LP. Thanks to Greg and Brett for their time and for making such a good time of it; This interview contained more laughter than any other I've done, and nobody was drinking. Perhaps since they view the band as a hobby of sorts, they can make light of the group more easily than others; or perhaps they're just like that. I will say it was a pleasure to interview them, especially Greg who is among the smartest people in the world having anything to do with rock 'n' roll, as you'll see.

GREG: There's a new song called "The Henchman" that has a slower tempo, but only 1/2 the song.

JR: The only criticism I have of Suffer, which was one of my favorite LPs of '88, was that since so many of the tempos are the same, the songs meshed together too much. You had to play the record 5 or 10 times before you could tell the songs apart. I've only heard the title track from the new LP, I've heard it on the radio, and that sounds the same too! What's up?

BRETT: I prefer all the songs to have their own tempo, OK? But we have a drummer that has three tempos: slow, fast and very fast. I swear to you Jack, I'm not exaggerating, I'm being honest. So having a choice between those, the only slow parts on that record are in "I Give You Nothing," that's the slow tempo. The fast tempo is "When" and the ultra-fast tempo is "How Much is Enough." Those are the 3 tempos, that's all he can play. I could beat my head against the wall in the studio for 24 hours and it wouldn't make any difference, he couldn't do it. (to Greg) Am I exaggerating?

GREG: You'll find the same disparity on this new record with the 3 tempos, but I think he's pushed the limit a little higher.

GREG + BRETT: Yeah, the fast is faster, the very fast is even faster, and the slow is a little slower, (both laugh), but less steady though.

JR: And live he plays even faster than on the

records, judging from last week's show. "Suffer" and "How Much is Enough" went flying by so fast I barely recognized them!

BRETT: Well there's no telling, basically if you've noticed his counts....This interview is like the interview of PETER. (laughs) But when Peter starts a song 1-2-1-2-3-4, and that's so we can all start at the same time, but that's all that means, because even then it's anyone's guess how fast the song's going to be. And we all go the speed of him.

GREG: Oh God! What you cue in to is that first snare beat. In the days before we came to New York I used to start the songs with my hands. I'd give him a good long clap, so everyone could hear the tempo, but even that didn't work.

JR: I think we'd better change the subject or we'll be hearing from Pete's attorney.

GREG: It's important to understand the limitations of a band when analyzing their music.

JR: Perhaps, but that's not only quite unusual, but a particularly frustrating limitation, since it hinders creative variety.

BRETT: We're not musicians. We're a punk rock band, or a hardcore band, or whatever you want to call us. We're not!

GREG: I don't think that has anything to do with it, there are punk rock bands that do have musicianship. (they argue) But in our case, no one is focused enough on music all the time to be called musicians. I think GREG HETSON is the closest thing to one 'cause he plays the most. But the other members, myself included, don't spend that much time playing music.

BRETT: The stuff that we do good is what you hear on our records. A real musician would focus more on subtleties and nuances. We try to have a good song with a memorable melody perhaps, and a greater meaning, and play it powerfully. We bash it out and what we end up with is what we are. We don't try to be more bluesey or whatever. Technically we're not able to do that.

JR: You've been going for a decade and you've seen the turnover in the hardcore scene about 15 times over. (both laugh) The people who are at your gig this year won't be there next year, but there will be someone else new there to take their place. It's a pretty constant rate of change, mostly teenagers making a pitstop of sorts. Do you feel strange up there? Do you feel there's this bizarre mutant behavior that is going on in front of you?

GREG: (laughs) No, hopefully there will be....The reason there's such a high turnover rate right now is just because the type of music we play is always associated with teenage angst and stuff like that. Hopefully as more and more people listen to it and see that it has a bit of integrity, they'll carry it with them for a significant portion of their growing years and maybe through their 20's. I know that the music I listened to as a teenager, before punk rock, I still enjoy listening to, and might even pay to see a concert by. I'm hoping that the kind of music that we play can draw some people who remember Bad Religion from their younger years, but really love the songs so much that they'd like to go experience the new Bad Religion.

BRETT: Which really isn't that different from the old Bad Religion.

GREG: Yeah, well, it's a little faster! (both laugh)

JR: Yeah, for instance a song like "1000 More Fools" seems like 1 1/2 times faster than "Fuck Armageddon This is Hell."

GREG: I agree.

BRETT: I don't know, when was the last time you played that? It's pretty fast!

JR: Two weeks ago as a matter of fact. No one is

51 saying it's slow or anything!

BRETT: Plus, I'll tell you for a fact, we were playing that song as fast as we could back then. I remember it was so fast I could hardly keep up.

JR: What I'm really driving at is....Most people who are making music in the hardcore scene without trying to stereotype...

GREG: (cutting him off) "I don't like to generalize, but it's usually misfits and so-on."

JR: No, now be fair, I am a former participant myself, and obviously I'm still hanging around these sort of shows on occasion when bands I like like yourselves play, and I can see it's mostly very young kids, to the point, much younger both in age and attitude than punk rock crowds of the late 70's early 80's, people who aren't capable of playing any other sort of music, in fact, people who aren't even interested in any other style of music but thrash/punk/hardcore, which I think is a severe detriment. And they play for crowds with much this narrow view. Obviously, there are exceptions, you have your brighter types in any closed scene, you get much more wiser, rounded people in any Junior High school environment, which is a typical HC gig these days. But do you ever get the feeling that you have nothing in common with your audience, that you're above them, or since that sounds snottier than I mean it, do you feel distanced somehow?

BRETT: Even when I was 15 I was an ego-maniac with an inferiority complex. I mean, I've always thought I was above everyone else and above everything, but at the same time I felt like I had really low self-esteem. The solution is "don't judge," don't worry about it. For me it's just something that's really fun to do. I'm lucky to get to do this!

GREG: Once you get to the point where you say you're above something, you seriously have to question why you're doing it. If I felt I was above this, I would move on and do something I'm not. I think you should always strive to be good at many things. I think we have achieved an excellence in this kind of music, but on the same note, I don't think we're better than the people in the audience. I merely think the major difference between us and them is experience, and age, and those are important factors.

BRETT: Plus, you made the point that these kids are into the music 'cause it's the only thing they themselves can play. That goes for me too. I couldn't play any other style, I don't have the ability.

GREG: This is a really recurring theme with Brett, he really thinks he couldn't play say heavy metal music if he wanted to.

JR: Wait a minute here Brett, aren't you on that 2nd LP a bit? (he nods) Don't you think that's a very different style of music that you played there!

9/81:"Bad Religion"
7" EP (Epitaph)

1981:HOW COULD HELL
BE ANY WORSE?





1983: INTO THE UNKNOWN (Epitaph)



1985: "Back to The Known 12" EP

BRETT: Yes, but I can't do that anymore, I was playing guitar every day back then. (Jack laughs) I was!

JR: You think you've regressed to the point that you can't play what you used to. (shakes head)

BRETT: I haven't gotten better, I've gotten worse.

GREG: I disagree.

JR: Let me rephrase the question, alright?

GREG: He still wants the question answered!

JR: The two places I feel the most out of place these days are in Church if someone gets married and I'm forced to go, or at hardcore shows (both laugh). That doesn't stop me from going if there's a band I want to see, like yours last week.

GREG: You're simply saying that you don't feel comfortable as you used to.

BRETT: You don't have a peer group. I agree with you actually. I go to see punk bands sometimes when they're in town, I went to see the HARDSONS, and I feel totally weird. But I don't feel weird at a Bad Religion show, 'cause we're playing. (all three laugh) I belong on stage, it's OK up there (more laughter).

JR: What affinity to you feel for the people who attend your shows. Any?

BRETT: It validates me that they're there, 'cause they've come to hear our music.

GREG: What affinity do we have?

BRETT: I feel like their wiser older brother.

GREG: I'm not going to use the analogy of a preacher, 'cause I don't like anyone who preaches, but what do you think a meritus professor at a university feels when he or she is standing at the front giving a lecture to a bunch of undergraduates. He might feel superior, but that's a personal thing. He's up there spouting off knowledge, and the students are there to absorb or not. We're playing music that we really enjoy. Some of the people out there might enjoy it and be into what we're saying or playing, and others may just turn their heads.

BRETT: What Greg is saying is true, 'cause our music works on 2 levels. It's like just high energy, confrontational, high impact music, OK, that's just going to slam you in the face. It can be really purging, it can be a good experience. At the same time, it's saying something. If you know what the lyrics are, if you understand them, we are trying to get something across. So on that level we have an affinity, it's our perception that we put across for them to consider. Besides, it's not all teenagers, a lot are college students too, or someone like yourself. What I'm doing up there is really cathartic. After a show I'm so happy for a week I don't yell at anybody, I've gotten everything out.

GREG: If we shift to a different music scene, what do you think of some of these old folk masters

playing in front of crowds of hippies? I'm sure it was like that in the 60's especially, people who learned from the older folk musicians from the 1800's. These guys are out there playing really traditional music, but there was a large following back then of hippies that smoked pot at their concerts (laughs). They didn't feel an affinity as you say for their audience, and yet they were extremely popular.

BRETT: Look at the GRATEFUL DEAD playing in front of 13 year olds.

GREG: I don't know exactly what you're trying to get at, but I don't think an affinity is always felt or must be felt.

JR: What about in the sense, that if you're a folk musician, your audience may have been born after you started making records, but you get the distinct sense that they're paying close attention to your performance, to your singing, playing and words. Do you get the feeling that your audiences, like the one last week, don't have a clue and don't care what you've got to say as long as you play fast and hard and loud for them to slam to. And that they'd turn against you if you attempted something more subtle?

BRETT: No, people always ask about our lyrics.

GREG: Your question is almost loaded. Our only feedback is from individuals, so we get those people asking "What did you mean by this?" We don't really know what everybody in the audience is thinking, obviously. All we can judge by is....

BRETT: Some of them are intimidated by it. They see these 2000 people at the shows....

GREG: I wasn't finished!

BRETT: Sorry. (laughs)

GREG: All we can judge by is that there are larger numbers of people coming to see us than other groups that play this, so we can only assume that they're there specifically to hear us.

JR: Yes, you top the Flipside polls.

GREG: Hey, let me tell you, Flipside is both a national and international magazine. How can you say just from Flipside you know how popular we are here.

BRETT: We're bigger in Germany than we are here.

JR: You played Europe in '89. Why did you skip the States on your way there?

GREG: You know the answer to that don't you? If you really thought about it, we aren't really a touring band are we? We're part time musicians, we have other things going on.

BRETT: We had to choose between the East Coast again and Europe. We had been to the East Coast in '88, so we did Europe in '89. Hopefully in '90 we'll do both. Last time we had a real small response on the East, but we arrived before Suffer came out. That was bad timing. Maybe we're more popular now.

JR: You were all but promoting a three year old EP Back to the Known in that sense!

GREG: That's true! (laughs)

BRETT: Have you noticed any greater buzz about Bad Religion there now?

JR: Sorry, it's out of my element, I wouldn't know.

BRETT: You're so out of it Jack.

JR: I must be, I like your group!

GREG: Well, Bad Religion, quoting from a 1981 press release, is a band for the people!

JR: And who wrote that!

GREG: Jay (original drummer).

BRETT: We are for the people..We used to be for the person.

JR: Sounds suspiciously like a reference to Into the Unknown there!

BRETT: Yes, you figured it out, but we won't go into that.

JR: You always seem in interviews to try to shy away from that album, am I correct?

GREG: No. (laughs)

JR: Well, then, what have you to say about it?

BRETT: We could go on for hours, but you don't have time in this interview. I'd love to just gab about it. (laughs)

JR: OK, it seems like you feel in terms of what you've done since, that that LP doesn't exist. Like a failed experiment?

GREG: There you go! Let's give him a multiple choice. A) Does not exist. B) Failed experiment.

BRETT: C) A genius piece of misunderstood artwork. D) All of the above! You read 1984 didn't you? (yes) You know how in newspeak they'd say that we're no longer at war with Southeast Asia, we are now at war with West Africa. So you see, it's our own newspeak. There is no album called Into the Unknown and there never has been!

JR: You'd better confiscate my evidence then! I'd like to see you rerecord the whole album and play it like "New Leaf" and "Along the Way" on Back to the Known, just bag the synthesizers. What do you say?

BRETT: Why doesn't your band do that? Just send me the tape and I'll pan it!

JR: Some of those songs are great though!

BRETT: Oh.....I hope so.

GREG: Uh....They might be, but they need a band like yours to do them.

BRETT: Yeah, they need someone like you Jack, who really understands them. We could write them, but we couldn't interpret them. It's kind of like DYLAN's "All Along the Watchtower." It needed JIMI HENDRIX to pull it off (and U2 to ruin it completely? --ed). It really belongs to Hendrix and I think "Chasing the Wild Goose" really belongs to Jack.

JR: To me?!?!?

GREG: Did you know there's a song on our new LP which is called "Billy?"

JR: Which is "Billy Gnosis" Part II perhaps?

GREG: Yes. We keep taking ideas from that.

JR: In conjunction to your other LPs, some people evolve and grow and incorporate new ideas, change their sound a bit, etc., adapt new styles. But that album has to be the most radical departure I've ever seen (both fall over laughing) in 15 years of avidly buying records (2nd place, Blitz's 2nd LP, doesn't even come close!--ed)!

GREG: There, you've got to admit from a purely punk perspective, that's a truly punk thing to do isn't it?

JR: Well of course it is! But then again you're talking to one of the 8 or 9 people in the U.S. who actually likes that record! (TIM SOMMER gave it a rave review in Village Voice though!--ed) But let's take that perspective further. From a purely punk and hardcore perspective of all the records you've released save for that one, 3 other albums and 2 other EPs of hardcore/punk music,..... What the hell came over you on that one! (both fall over again cracking up)

BRETT: I don't know. I still don't know. I know what came over me. I was taking a lot of acid and Greg was listening to a lot of JETHRO TULL at the time (both crack up again).

JR: Is this true?

GREG: What can I say? I grew up listening to Jethro Tull stuff and I thought, "maybe with this hardcore sound we had on the first album, we could blend some of these elements in..." (both laugh again)

JR: You actually thought that?!

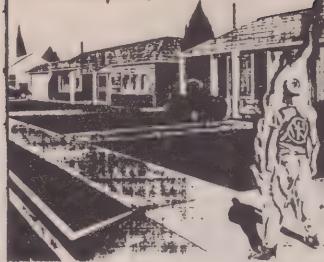
BRETT: No way, we didn't know what we were doing!

GREG: What were you doing at the age of 17?

BRETT: Look, we did the first LP spontaneously.

BAD RELIGION

SUFFER



1988: SUFFER
(Epitaph)

1989: NO CONTROL
(Epitaph)

I just said "OK here's my new songs. They sound a little different from the old songs!"

GREG: Jack, think what you're doing from the period of the age of 15 or 17. I was 15 when the original Bad Religion formed, and you probably went through so many changes in that period, you didn't know which way was up. Now that you're seeing some consistency finally, maybe as a group we understand, we had an identity crisis and now we've been to the shrink.

BRETT: We found ourselves. We went to Est as a group.

GREG: So ask everybody what they were doing from 15-17, you'll get some really silly answers. I think the most healthy people in the world are the ones that look back to that period and laugh. Maturity is a constant thing.

JR: Is it a safe thing to say you don't like that record now, did you like it when it was released? Did you like what you heard when you recorded it?

BRETT: I liked it, but I was seeing colors at the time.

GREG: He's blaming it on the drugs, that's not fair.

BRETT: No, no, no, but I liked it. In fact, there's still a song or two on the record I still like.

GREG: Yeah, I don't say I dislike the album, I don't think I've listened to it in like 6 or 7 years.

BRETT: It wasn't a Bad Religion LP, we should have called it something else.

JR: You mean like DUKE OF STRATOSPHERE?

BRETT: Yeah, we should have called it "Dukes of Badosphere." (all three in hysterics)

GREG: Yeah, but we didn't have the maturity, or any foresight whatsoever, the knowledge to say "Hey, this might really piss some people off!"

JR: Did you attempt to play that record for any major labels (both laugh again)? You could have gotten signed easy with that stuff!

GREG: Let's get one thing straight, we were not looking for a major label deal, if we were looking for a major deal we wouldn't have put it out on Epitaph records!

BRETT: We weren't trying to sell out.

JR: Maybe you should have gone for it! I'd think it was hilarious if that LP went platinum and you were all in the teen mags!

GREG: Man what a thought. No, we didn't play it for anybody.

BRETT: That's true, we never shopped it, we weren't that sophisticated. We were teenagers.

NOTE: I'd intended to finish this,

but with 6 other transcriptions to

do, I ran out of time. Sorry,

another Part 2 will have to run

next issue. We welcome anyone who

wants to help with transcriptions!

Warning: it's the ultimate in tedium!

IAN MCCULLOCH



IAN MCCULLOCH BEING INTERVIEWED, WARNER BROS. CONFERENCE ROOM, JANUARY 23, 1990. ANOTHER INFORMAL CONVERSATION. (photo Andrea Mulrain)

IAN MCCULLOCH interview (transcribed by Jack Rabid)

Ian McCulloch was interviewed on January 23, 1990 in a Warner Brothers conference room. In town to promote his March U.S. tour, Ian seemed a changed man since last we spoke to him in Big Takeover 3 years ago. With the split of The Bunnymen (as we knew it) and the start of his solo career, one would expect Mac would be feeling more pressure. However, he seemed as relaxed, and comfortable as his solo LP Candleland. We had already spoken on the phone 5 months prior when he was touring the U.K. and had discussed his quitting Echo, and the impact on his life of the consecutive deaths of his father (Candleland is dedicated to him), his old drummer PETE DEFRETTAS (in a motorbike crash last summer), and his good friend from Liverpool's THE PALE FOUNTAINS. That conversation can be found in Alternative Press, issue #25/26 (info: 1451 W. 112th St., Suite 1, Cleveland, OH 44102). Unfortunately, due to transatlantic phone problems, the interview had to be cut short after 15 minutes, so we agreed to meet again in person when next he was in NY to do a "proper" interview. Having cleared up most of the important points over the phone, this is just an informal chat about nothing in particular.

Echo and The Bunnymen made 5 albums. Mac has made one. More recently, Will and Les have reformed The Bunnymen, minus Mac and Pete, and have played shows in Liverpool in anticipation of recording a new LP, while Mac has added a backing band, THE PRODIGAL SONS for his tours and future recordings. So far, they've already released three b-sides of this new grouping, on two separate formats of the new "Faith and Healing" single in the UK. And you can read about three of the U.S. live shows in the live reviews section of this mag.

We also refer you to issue 24, which contains our previous Big T. interview with McCulloch, during the 2nd to last Bunnymen tour of the U.S. That also has a short history of his career as well as an Echo singles discography. Thanks to Mary Melia at Warners and Alternative Press, and of course, Ian, for making this possible. It's always a thrill to interview someone whose work you've fiercely admired for a decade.

Also present for this interview was another great fan of Ian's, ANDREA MULRAIN, who also asked a few questions. Thanks to her as well.

JR: Can you speak for a second?

IAN: Hullo.

JR: That's pretty good.

IAN: How are you keeping?

JR: I'm alright. Where are you playing on your March solo tour of the States?

IAN: The Ritz.

JR: Good!

IAN: It's good is it?

JR: Much more intimate than where you used to play here the last eight years. It's like 2000-3000.

IAN: Good sound in there?

JR: Way better than at Roseland or Radio City, that's for sure (places Bunnymen played last time in '88). It's moved since you last played there 10 years ago, it's now where Studio 54 used to be.

IAN: I hated Roseland.

JR: Did you ever go to Studio 54 before it became the Ritz? I remember it was a big deal in the press when the Clash checked out the place in '79. I never went there.

IAN: No, wasn't it just a dance club?

JR: Yeah, it was a big blaring disco.

IAN: Yeah

JR: You know you're going to be playing next to the stage of the old ED SULLIVAN theater?

IAN: Oh really??!!

JR: Maybe you can do "Twist and Shout" again!

IAN: He had some great stuff on, didn't he, old Ed? (to his manager) Any chance of getting some oysters?

JR: STEVE DIGGLE told me you ran into him at his F.O.C. gig in Paris at the Locomotive (2000 people showed up. Did you have a good time with him?

IAN: Yeah! Yeah, well, we only talked about 10 minutes, but it was nice. I missed the show, 'cause I did loads of interviews that day, and I ended up turning up late, but it was nice seeing him. (Diggle said he mentioned Ian singing a line of "Harmony in My Head" in Ian's last Big Takeover interview three years ago, which he was quite flattered by) How did it go over here with them? (Buzzcocks)

JR: They went over big, sold out at The Ritz and all these other big places like Metro in Chicago and Santa Monica Civic. It was the most exciting shows I've seen in a long time.

IAN: Ah, that's good. With PETE SHELLEY?

JR: Sure, the whole post-HOWARD DEVOTO lineup. Same four guys who made all the records.

IAN: Great. And they were that good?

JR: Incredible. Much better than anyone would have expected after 9 years like that. People were singing along at all of the gigs I saw.

IAN: Well you're a massive BZZCOCKS fan, aren't you?

JR: Yeah, but like I said, those gigs were sellouts, everyone else must still be too. None of the other reunion shows I saw had crowds that excited, or any other show I saw the last few years, even independent from how I personally feel about them. You didn't see them in Manchester last month, huh?

IAN: We were going to, it's only an hour from Liverpool. We were intending to go, but I don't know, I was probably working or something, so...It's hard getting out these days.

JR: A friend of mine saw some of your debut solo tour in England a few months ago.

IAN: Oh yeah? How were we?

JR: She thought you were excellent, kind of what my appetite for March.

IAN: Yeah, they were great. The earlier shows, the first couple were...You know we were learning, 'cause I'd never played with anyone else, but we are pretty good I think. They're great, THE PRODIGAL SONS, and it's easier to dance to than The Bunnymen

I think, don't know why. It's a bit slinkier I think.

JR: I heard you did a few Bunnymen songs.

IAN: Yeah, I did "Rescue" and "Killing Moon" in England, but I won't be doing "Killing Moon" over here I don't think.

JR: You're more interested in doing your own stuff?

IAN: Yeah. But I'll probably do a couple of Bunnymen things and I don't know, it's a difficult one. I'm torn really. I think if they work alright and they don't make me...uh, if they don't upset me or anyone else than they're worth doing, but....Because I can't just pretend that that didn't exist, I don't want to pretend that it didn't. So we'll see. Should run an opinion poll with some fans and see what songs they'd like to hear.

JR: (dial 970-MACC?) Speaking of which, since it sounds like you're referring to your old mates in the Bunnymen, Andrea here was telling me there was a report in NME that WILL and LES are finally going out and doing some gigs as "The Bunnymen" in Liverpool.

IAN: Yeah, they're doing some community centre in Bootle, Liverpool, which is not the most prestigious gig you've....But, I don't know, apparently it's fallen on hard times, the place, and I think the new singer used to play there with his old band, ST. VITUS DANCE. I think they should start aiming higher than where St. Vitus Dance got to, 'cause they ended up nowhere, you know.

JR: You think they should be playing at Royal Court Theater instead?

IAN: Yeah, that's just Dushouse in Bootle, it's just like rundown.....

JR: Bootle is outside downtown Liverpool?

IAN: It's not in the center, it's kind of horrible, it's probably my least favorite district. It's got nothing, you know. It's one of the worst, it's even going up North in Liverpool. It's kind of weird, it's risky a little bit.

JR: I've only been to the Matthew Street area (where Beatles played Cavern Club every day, and Bunnymen used to play at Erics).

IAN: Yeah, I'm sure it will be a great gig. (smiles) Yeah, I wish them well, it's good they're finally getting something together. But I had heard they were planning to record an album in January, and in the press release it said this was going to be the warmup to play the stuff before they record it. So I think I'll be doing me second before they do their first.

JR: Are you already booked into the studio?

IAN: No, but I've kind of...We're looking for studios for around June 'cause when we finish the tour it will be around May. And then I think I'll need...At least, I think I'll probably go on holiday that month 'cause I haven't had one in a couple of years. Then I'll come back and do the album. The good thing about recording when you come off tour is that you're playing well and singing well and stuff, but I think after two months on tour I'll need, it would do me head in going back into the studio.

JR: Get to see the wife and kid again.

IAN: Yeah! Well, she'll be coming along on the tour, but it's different, you need to get out of the mad lifestyle.

JR: Will you be working with (producer) RAY SCHULMAN (Sundays, Sugarcubes, etc., former member of 70's prog rock band Gentle Giant) again?

IAN: Don't know! I doubt it, I think I want to do it with GIL NORTON maybe..

JR: The guy who did Ocean Rain with you?

IAN: Yeah. And PIXIES. He's great. He's just redone "Candleland," it's coming out as a single in Europe, and we did it with him. It was me and

him co-producing, me kind of getting the drinks and making sure the guitars were put there.

JR: Really? Did you re-record it or just remix it?

IAN: Re-recorded it. It's got an extended bit. 'Cause the way we started playing it live, a lot of people said they thought it was better than on the record.

JR: So no LIZ FRAZIER this time, huh?

IAN: Yeah! She's there again.

JR: You got her to come back in the studio again to re-record her backing vocals too? Interesting.

IAN: Yeah. The mix, they're putting more guitar on it at ROB and Liz's (COCTEAU TWINS) studio. I just phoned him up, actually, he sounded very like Robin does, strange and funny.

ANDREA: Will and Les are still using the name Bunnymen?

IAN: As far as I know. That's what their press releases say.

ANDREA: Does that piss you off? It must! It's kind of resentful in a way.

IAN: Um...I mean, I don't know, I just think it's stupid, really. I think they're being told by their management and the record company that that's the strongest thing they had apart from the ability to play guitar and bass, was the name.

ANDREA: So the record company (WEA UK) is more or less saying basically that the name is going to sell records, so they should keep it?

IAN: Yeah. I think to a large extent, yeah. Even if it's only a case of the record company recouping so much money. I can't really see the record company thinking it's going to be the next U2.

ANDREA: Hopefully it won't be! (laughs)

IAN: Yeah! But I don't know, I think it's really strange. After 10 years it's like...What are they going to do when they're 50, start Bunnymen again?....(seeing a tape by Jack on the table) Who is SPRINGHOUSE?

JR: That's the group I'm in, I'm the drummer.

IAN: Oh, is it? Oh yeah, I remember reading about you.

JR: I sent you the article from B-side magazine when I sent you my last issue, I thought you'd like to see it since they compared us to Echo and the Bunnymen and The Buzzcocks and others. I thought you'd find it amusing, though I couldn't say how apt the reference is, I'll let you judge from the tape, it's for you. Actually, no one I've ever heard sounds like The Bunnymen to me. I don't think anyone could, truly.

IAN: Neither do I. I don't know, people just.....I mean, I said that to someone the other day, and he was saying there are loads of bands over here that people compared (to Echo), but I don't know.

ANDREA: There are many cheap imitations.

JR: Well, yes, there are people who try to sound like you, but there are some ingredients they just can't imitate no matter how much they rip you off.

IAN: They haven't got that sense of beauty, there's something, I don't know.

JR: Like, have you heard OCEAN BLUE? (A and J laugh)

IAN: I've heard about them. Even the name sounds like us! (all 3 laugh)

ANDREA: Why don't they just change it to "Ocean Rain" already?

JR: Yeah, come clean! It's pretty obvious, anyway. "Not the Bunnymen but at least a pleasant tribute."

IAN: Is that what they're like, kind of more Ocean Rain stuff?

JR: Sort of yeah. Maybe a bit of all 5 albums really, but more the last two.

IAN: Umm. I'd like to hear it. Are they on Sire?

JR: Yes, and (not) coincidentally enough, they're

currently on tour supporting a much more hollow group of Bunnymen wannabes, THE MIGHTY LEMON DROPS. They should call the tour Bunny-mania!

IAN: Funny Sire doing that, 'cause it's only been the last couple of years that Sire realized there was something there in us, though to be fair SEYMOUR (STEIN, head of Sire) was the one who saw us first and wanted to sign us. But for quite a few of our tours we came over here and it was like, we felt like we were people they thought were crap. Now all of a sudden they put package tours together. Yeah, it's weird.

ANDREA: I was at the New York show of the Lemon Drops/Ocean Blue tour with TONY FLETCHER (who wrote a book on the Bunnymen).

IAN: Oh yeah, I saw Tony last night.

ANDREA: And I was just getting nauseous listening to Ocean Blue, I kept grabbing Tony and going "What's this sound like to you!" I had to walk away, I couldn't even watch it. They're like 17 year old kids from Pennsylvania.

JR: Who want to be you!

ANDREA: Covering you guys up and down, everything but the titles.

IAN: What do they look like?

JR: They look English, before I heard they were from here, I thought they were English from the photo I saw. Actually though, as derivative as they are, and they really are, I don't mind them. They're not that bad, they're OK to listen to, a more flattering mimic. If I never heard the original I'd be really excited about them, which I can't say about the more recent Lemon Drops stuff, that's 7th rate in comparison.

IAN: Really? I have to say I like them (MLD). I'll check out Ocean Blue, I'm curious.

JR: You started to talk about STONE ROSES in your last Melody Maker interview.

IAN: Oh yeah. I mean I don't think they're the greatest group ever, but I think they're the kind of people that mothers don't like and I think that's really good (Jack laughs). They write really good tunes, their first album is all pretty much the one song, but the tunes are really good, and the guitar player (JOHN SQUIRE) is great. (agreed)

JR: Yeah, Squire is terrific! I saw them in London at Dingwalls in May before they really took off (now they play 70,000 seat stadiums! Dingwalls is a small club), and he blew me away.

IAN: Oh really?! I haven't seen 'em yet, but I remember Hookey (NEW ORDER's PETER HOOK, who produced Stone Roses' 3rd single "Elephant Stone") saying years ago that they were really good and I never got around to seeing them. I like HAPPY MONDAYS as well, I think they're funny. It's good, it's come out of the blue (the current Manchester scene), and though it's kind of harkened back to the past more so, like the Stone Roses, it's still come from nowhere, and it's got an attitude as well.

JR: Have you heard the most recent LOU REED LP?

IAN: What, New York? Yeah, I bought it as soon as it came out. I think about 5 songs are really good and the rest I can kind of live without. But the first 4 or 5 I really like. I love "Dirty Blvd." and "Romeo and Juliet."

JR: I thought it was some of his best stuff since the mid 70's.

IAN: Yeah, some of it, definitely. But I liked Blue Mask and even New Sensations 'cause it's funny. I agree with you, though I think the idea that it's his best album since the VELVETS is ridiculous.

JR: Maybe since Street Hassle, yeah.

IAN: Yeah, maybe since then. But even Berlin is better than that I think, and Transformer I prefer to it. It's got some of the coolest Lou stuff he's

said in a while, but just tune wise it's like the same tune on about four songs. He seems to have got stuck on that now, he finds it hard to come up with a good melody, which is strange 'cause he's come up with some of the best.

JR: Yeah, everybody's covering him these days, that's for sure (see "Run Run Run" and "There She Goes Again" by Bunnymen along with all the others). Did you hear about "Songs for Drella"?

IAN: No, what's that?

JR: Lou and JOHN CALE reunited and have been playing shows under that title in Brooklyn here.

IAN: Oh yeah, I have, he mentioned something about that in some interview in England. What's that all about?

JR: They were doing a tribute to (Velvet Underground mentor, among other things) ANDY WARHOL, whose nickname to them was "Drella." They wrote songs about him.

IAN: Oh yeah. Are they still playing, I'd love to go see it!

ANDREA: I think it's over now.

IAN: Did you go?

JR: Couldn't get a ticket. They were pretty scarce and sought after, that's for sure! You know how big the Velvets are now everywhere, much less here where they were from!

IAN: I know, that's a bummer.

JR: The funny thing is that that the Velvets drummer MOE (TUCKER) showed up one night, and they had her on stage for the encore to sing "Pale Blue Eyes!"

IAN: Really?! I think I read about that. So were they well received?

JR: Oh yeah. My friend got a tape, people were applauding like mad. Closest thing you'll see these days to a Velvets' reunion!

IAN: Yeah! Did they do any other Velvets' songs?

JR: That was the only one on the tape I heard of that one night, I don't know about the other shows. None of the reviews I saw mentioned any, and I'm sure they would have (you know it).

IAN: Will they do any more shows you think?

JR: Not that I know of, it was probably just a one off, though an album should come out of the songs from what I hear....(Ian nods)....Here's a silly trivia question. Whatever happened to BLAIR CUNNINGHAM (ex-HAIRCUT 100 drummer who drummed for Bunnymen on '86 U.S. tour while PETE DEFREITAS quit briefly to join SEX GODS and disappear in New Orleans)?

IAN: I'm not sure. He got married. Last thing I knew he was in THE PRETENDERS but,...I don't know, knowing their record he might be dead by now! (all 3 laugh) He's probably still running around the hotel somewhere in Toronto.

JR: Don't keep in touch with him, huh.

IAN: No, I mean I always meant to, but he's one of them people that....he was a nice enough lad but we didn't have much in common. He was a mercenary kind but a nice one. I think music to him is just a drum beat (he plays on table with his fingers).

JR: How did you know of him, had you heard of him in Haircut 100? I can't imagine you were a fan of theirs!

IAN: No, we needed a drummer, and we had 3 weeks before the American tour, it had all been booked. Pete hadn't come back from New Orleans. So we had 3 weeks to go and it was a case of getting a drummer who could learn the stuff. We had thought of getting a new drummer, but that would have meant that we would have wanted someone to take his time and learn and fit in, but we had to go for someone who could learn 20 songs in 3 weeks.

JR: No fans dieing for the chance, or old mates

"Twist and Shout" 'cause that was easier to sing, but "Paint it Black," 'cause of the drumming, Pete doing that thing it was still in keeping.

JR: This is like your 15th trip to America, isn't it?

IAN: Something like that, yeah. Jet lag still kicking in, though that might be the red wine last night, and two pints of Guinness, it was great having Guinness, I haven't had that for ages. The Irish pub just around the corner. It was good.

JR: Do you ever have the feeling that you've spent too much time here? Do you like coming here so often?

IAN: I do actually, I like playing America. I think maybe we played too much at the end...I don't know, maybe that's where the audience was, it was good. The audiences were responding, a fairly cool audience. Much better to play for 4000 responsive people in America than 200 in Stockholm.

JR: You played to that little? What?

IAN: No, we used to do alright in Stockholm, 1500 or so, it's not a great market. But I think you do learn from playing Europe, there's more subtle kind of influences on you. Not really musically, just mentally, you kind of....Everywhere I go I think I'm loads of different people anyway, but in Europe it's different. If you get what I mean, just what runs through me head and what starts taking me over. Brazil was really good to play, I got something different on stage than I'd ever had from an audience before. I think after that I became a bit warmer on stage...

JR: What were they doing?

IAN: I don't know, they just laughed at all the right things, all the things I wanted them to laugh at. Just little...I talked a lot in between songs and they giggled at all the right things..

JR: (perplexed) They could understand you?

IAN: Yeah, a lot of them speak English.

JR: I speak English too and half the time I don't even understand what you're saying on stage!

IAN: Yeah. Well maybe it was the Brazilian cocktail, made it easier to understand. It's a good place, it's a thriving, I wouldn't say underground, but alternative to Julio Engleias, they like kind of dark music. I say dark, but I never thought we were dark, I thought we were dead comfy.

JR: Yeah, particularly those last two albums and your new solo one.

IAN: No, I think the others as well. Crocodiles as one. I think Crocodiles has a lot of colors on it. Yeah, Ocean Rain, and that last one that was more...it did have colors, but it was definitely our last album, but I try not to think of it as

IAN MCCULLOCH (L) WITH FRIEND RUPERT HOWARD (RUTS FANS WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT HOWARD DREW THE SLEEVE OF THEIR "DIFFERENT VIEW" SINGLE!, AT RITZ POST-GIG PARTY, MARCH 23, 1990 (photo: Jack Rabid)



from the old Liverpool days?

IAN: No, we did know a few drummers from Liverpool, that might have been something to do. It's trivial now, that was four years ago, but that's a fair enough question wondering what happened to him. We did some festivals the summer of that year, Pete was back in and Blair was in Pretenders who were playing the same festivals as us. He flew home, he hired a plane to fly over. He did one festival and then he flew home in the morning after staying up all night to get married and then he flew back the next day, he got a helicopter or something to the next gig! But he had the most ridiculous suit on I'd ever seen. It was all sequined and he was totally out of his head! He was nice though.

JR: How did Seymour Stein discover you?

IAN: He saw us at the YMCA in London, our first ever London gig. It was some festival, us and **JOY DIVISION** were on the first night and **TEARDROP EXPLODES** and **ESSENTIAL LOGIC**. It was us on first, we opened the thing, and he thought we were the best. I heard it was 'cause he fancied me (all laugh), but I shouldn't really say such nonsense. No, he's good, and then **ROB DICKENS**, he became head of Warner Brothers in Britain, he was on Warners Publishing, during the space of a couple of months of us getting our publishing deal he got put in charge of Warners. And then they did this thing with Seymour, he invented Korova Records with Sire here. We were always into Sire because of The **TALKING HEADS** and all that.

JR: Yeah, I remember you covering "The Big Country" at The World (a secret, nearly all covers, after-Felt Forum New York gig in '86) here.

IAN: Yeah, we actually did that alright.

JR: Which reminds me. Why did you record and release "People Are Strange," which was a big nothing, instead of the great **DOORS** cover we've seen you do live, "Soul Kitchen?"

IAN: Uh, because they wanted that song for the film it appeared in ("The Lost Boys"). I didn't want to do it anyway, but, you know it was another wrong move in a year of wrong moves.

JR: Funny that turned out to be your last single with Echo.

IAN: I know. That was it, that was one thing I regretted. I'd already made up my mind and that kind of worried me that that was too ironic, but in the end I just thought "ehhhh." Maybe it was the right way, maybe Ocean Blue will finish their career with an Echo and the Bunnymen song (Jack cracks up).

JR: I wish someday you'd release an album of all those covers you were doing on your Scandinavian tour, that On Strike bootleg radio broadcast was excellent in particular.

IAN: Yeah, we were going to put out an official bootleg type thing. I might do that anyway, it's just getting the time. 'Cause the minute you start doing something, if you go into a studio to do it, you think you're going to just rattle them off and then you start adding things and you start producing....But I think with this band we might do some weird covers, but I think that was another thing with the Bunnymen, we ended up doing covers and I don't know, it took away from what we were all about in the end. It didn't for a while, in Scandinavia it helped for a while, it kind of loosened the band up, and then it just became a feature, it was hard to drop "Twist and Shout," you know. 'Cause it was an easy one to come on and do and make it work.

JR: "Paint it Black" as well, you were doing a lot.

IAN: Yeah, I mean that was kind of different, I didn't mind doing that so much, although I preferred

a Bunnymen album.

JR: What do you think of it as?

IAN: I don't know, it's not really all there, it's kind of half a Bunnymen album.

JR: Was it like sketches? Like were the songs half finished or something?

IAN: No, too finished, it just wasn't right, there wasn't enough friction in it.

JR: I thought it was just that uninspiring mix. The one that was done by that guy here without you present. I thought it was engineered OK.

IAN: Noooooo, it was just as much mixed as it was, you can only do so much while you're mixing it unless you put it all through a flanger or something, that's what we played. It wasn't the mix generally I would have liked, but it wasn't far off. I know **WILL** and **LES** were saying that the mix was terrible, and that it was nothing like the original recording like you've done now, but that's how it was. Pretty much, what else could it be? What could you do to the mix? Certain mixes can smooth things over but I don't think he even did that, I think we might have recorded it smoother than we should have done, maybe.

JR: I really liked **LAURIE LATHAM**'s work with **STRANGERS** a few years before, I love that Aural Sculpture LP he did.

IAN: Yeah, I really like that as well! "Skin Deep" is great.

JR: "Ice Queen" is great too.

IAN: Yeah!

JR: Though it seemed like an odd choice for you at the time.

ANDREA: Where did you get Prodigal Sons from?

IAN: The drummer played with **MARC ALMOND** for about six years, and he was also his drummer (laughs to himself at his bad joke). One of them actually played with us in New York and Boston when we came over for those two dates to warm up for our Albert Hall show (in the summer of '83).

JR: That guy who was the 3rd guitarist? That guy was all over the stage, like he was the focal point of the band or something, I thought!

IAN: Welllllll, I mean he's like that, now he's even more like that, but he's funny. He makes me laugh, it's a lot different from Bunnymen, he just comes on and starts running around and slashing at his guitar. I mean I like the Will thing as well (standing stone still bent over the instrument except when getting feedback out of the guitar), but I didn't want to have another Will. We all smile at each other, and we laugh, and it's great. In the early days of the Bunnymen, as intense as we might have been, we used to communicate a bit more.

JR: The camouflage gear was pretty funny. Like the Clash or something.

IAN: It was meant to be a bit funny, but it looked good with my hair and stupid boots on, that made it quite an un-military thing but a lot of people took it too seriously. I don't know, I'm glad I don't wear that anymore.

JR: What are you using for a intro tape, now that you're on your own. No more gregorian chorals I suppose.

IAN: We used "The Sound of Music" in England (Jack makes a face). (sings) "The Hills are alive...."

ANDREA: (laughing) **JULIE ANDREWS** comes out.

IAN: And before that **DEAN MARTIN** singing "Little Old Wine Drinking Me." It sounded fantastic. I wanted to get away from that Gregorian, the heavyness.

JR: Am I wrong in thinking that "Proud to Fall" sounds a lot like "The Game."

IAN: Not far off, it is kind of an extension of

it, so....

JR: When's the New York show?

IAN: March 23.

JR: Should be really different after all those years of Bunnymen shows. You even played here with them just 2 years ago!

IAN: Yeah, people should come to see the show expecting a bit more warmer. It's still rock 'n' roll, but it's less intense, 'cause we're all getting a bit older. I want it to be like the meal last night, that was great! If I could laugh that much on stage! That happened in England, sometimes I laughed so hard I had to stop the song.

JR: Do some more of your snake dances, that always cracks me up!

IAN: It's getting better, it's easier to dance to this stuff, so I just go for it. (laughs under his breath:) "snake dance" (shakes his head) I did it this one gig in Paris in a club just before Christmas, and I did it the best that I've ever done in me life. With these shoes (points). "Snake dance!" I'll get it better for America. There's a song called "I'm One" that's great for that. I should walk through the audience trying to get everyone else to do it!

JR: What are you opening with?

IAN: Ahhhh! It's a secret!

(ORIGINAL) T.S.O.L.



(ORIGINAL) T.S.O.L.'s RON EMORY (L) AND JACK GRISHAM, ALL SMILES AT THEIR REUNION, RAJI'S, HOLLYWOOD, CA, JANUARY 2, 1990. (photo: Rabid)

(ORIGINAL) T.S.O.L. interview (transcribed by Jack Rabid)

JACK GRISHAM and **RON EMORY** were interviewed during sound check of their 2nd and last reunion gig at Raji's in Hollywood, CA, January 2, 1990. Their previous show occurred less than a week prior on December 2 (see L.A. section of live reviews) in front of giant crowd close to 3000, at Anaheim's Celebrity Theater. Clearly it was a popular reunion, at almost \$20 a pop!

The whole scenario is peculiar in that there is another completely different T.S.O.L. in existence that evolved from this original lineup. Let's explain by way of history:

T.S.O.L. (True Sounds of Liberty) formed 'round 1980 in Long Beach, California, South L.A. The four members were semi-reforming juvenile delinquents (Jack vocals, Ron guitar, **MIKE ROCHE** bass, **TODD BARNES** drums) looking for something more productive to do, and within a year or two they were the biggest

drawing punk band in L.A., just ahead of Circle Jerks and Black Flag. An absolutely dynamic live quartet blessed with a super front man with a legitimate crazy streak, they were also enigmatic while the rest of L.A. hardcore scene were (for the most part) playing it close to the vest. Jack changed his name with every record (other last names: Gregors, Delauge, LaDoga, one record he was even Alex Morgan, causing many to think the band had a new singer), changing personas even faster.

After a broiling, largely political (one of the more articulate indignation records) debut 5 song EP, their first LP Dance With Me shifted to death-rock fashion that hinted that their main influence in music was The Damned (good choice). They toured the country with THE ADOLESCENTS' FRANK AGNEW on loan on 2nd guitar (steaming show at Hoboken's ill-fated Mile Square City club!), and became a regular on the U.S punk circuit (more tours, show at Danceteria, great show at old Ritz). A 2nd (7") EP sounded even more Damned influenced (one song, "Man and Machine" was lifted directly from "Sick of Being Sick," a trick Ron played on the other members, claiming he wrote it!), so a permanent keyboard player, GREG KUEHN, was brought into the fold to bring in some of the more recent Damned (Strawberries, Black Album) influences. Thus begun the most inspired and unusual partnership in punk history, as evidenced by late '82's Beneath The Shadows, the best keyboard dripping, psychedelic (Ron's now amazing sound meeting troubling, fluid keyboards) punk LP ever made, and a huge stylistic advancement that was shunned by an increasingly more narrow minded, younger punk scene. For T.S.O.L. were undeniably caught up in the hardcore explosion in Southern California. They headlined huge shows that ended in battles with police or other punks. The most memorable one was their set at The S.I.R. space on Sunset Blvd. in Hollywood on January 8, 1983, supported by Social Distortion, Redd Kross, Los Olvidados and Toxic Reasons. The opening bands managed to play, but midway through T.S.O.L.'s set, the L.A. riot cops stormed the place. Jack wisely instructed the audience to immediately sit down, which initially confused the police who needed the pretext of a "riot" to bust the show (and the noggin's) of the hated punk youths. Not knowing what to do with a room of sitting kids, they began to beat the kids with their nightsticks anyway, setting off the pandemonium and mass flight for the exits (where the rest of the cops were waiting) they'd anticipated in the first place.

This being a typical experience, the band was forced to play secret gigs under assumed names, and after a last tour supporting the 2nd Brilliant LP Beneath The Shadows (unbelievable show at Gildersleeves) heightened tensions in the band (apparently between Roche and Jack), they disbanded in the summer of '83, the first big casualty to the out of control punk scene. For many, their sudden demise represented the final snuffing of the last flickering hope of 3rd wave punk progress, instead of the ceaseless regression parody it was already becoming and has mostly remained since, with nice exceptions.

Jack and Greg formed CATHEDRAL OF TEARS, who did incredible live shows, recorded a fantastic demo, then released a pretentious, crappy EP after Greg exited (to play with Bob Dylan) without being adequately replaced! A few years later, Jack formed TENDER FURY, his current band, which has sometimes included Todd, though he has once again quit. Their L.A. live show was good, but again, their 2 LPs are uncharacteristic commercial rock with neither edge nor style, a big disappointment.

In '84, Ron and Mike emerged with a new T.S.O.L., adding ex-HATED singer/guitarist JOE WOOD and ex-JONESES drummer MITCH DEAN. Unfortunately, after a decent LP Change Today (though 1/80th as good as Beneath the Shadows) and an OK tour, the more recent T.S.O.L devolved into a metal-rock band (the same calamity that Tender Fury is, only far worse), wasting a lot of great talent. Unbeknownst to this writer, both Ron (last year) and Mike (a week before the interview) had also left (Mike was fired) the current T.S.O.L., meaning none of the original members were part of the current band.

Thus emerged the completely bizarre situation of the original band reuniting and playing on Dec. 2, AND THE CURRENT T.S.O.L. WITH 4 DIFFERENT PEOPLE PLAYING ALSO AS "T.S.O.L." THE NIGHT BEFORE, ALSO IN L.A! This subject is very sensitive: My reporting of this in Alternative Press prompted an angry letter from (Current T.S.O.L.) drummer Mitch Dean, an old friend, who accused me of stabbing him in the back and demanding with great indignation that "there is only one T.S.O.L," concluding "it's a good thing I don't have more friends like you, that would really be a bummer." As his group is signed to Enigma and the older lineup merely reunited for these 2 shows, there will be no confusion in the future, but for this week, over Mitch's protests, there was indeed TWO T.S.O.L.'s, and the old lineup clearly outdrew the current one several times over, as I reported. I will draw no conclusions from this odd episode, other than to say: it was exciting to see the show (!!!), surprising to learn what I did in this interview (??), and sad to lose an old pal, but sometimes that's the price of narrating as you see it. Se la guerre. One person's truth is another's fiction, sadly.

Thanks to Jack and Ron for sitting for the interview, and to all four for coming back and playing the old songs just for the goof of it. I often wish more bands would. If Fats Domino can play songs he released in 1949, and do nothing more recent than 1962, than nostalgia is as acceptable in music as the thrill of investigating the new. Music never dies, and in the hands of it's creators may forever spring anew to our delight.

JR: Let me get this straight. Neither you Ron, or MIKE are in the current T.S.O.L. anymore? So with you reuniting the old band for these two gigs, right now there's 2 bands calling themselves T.S.O.L. playing this week with 2 completely different sets of members? That seems strange.

RON: You'll have to ask JOE WOOD about that. It's his band now. Actually, I heard it's the new guitar player MARSHALL's band now, which is pretty amusing.

JACK: They own the whole world.

JR: Are they still signed to Enigma?

RON: Yes they are. They went around the horn, tried to get signed to everyone, everyone looked at them, and they ended up going back with Enigma.

JR: So how did you and Mike drop out?

RON: Mike I guess just got kicked out. I quit in the middle of recording.

JR: Did you tell them they could keep the name? Didn't you feel like it was yours somehow?

RON: It was. It felt like it was part mine. But I was so fed up with all the bullshit that went on with everything, that I just forfeited all interest in it pretty much.

JR: So when did you bury the hatchet with Jack. People said you didn't get along, and that's how the original T.S.O.L. broke up in '83.

RON: Jack and me didn't get along? Maybe certain people at times didn't, but for the most part we all pretty much got along. There were little squabbles here and there, right Jack?

JACK: Yeah. But that wasn't it.

JR: Well considering there's a band called T.S.O.L. that has none of you in it, where did you decide to reform this original lineup, however briefly?

JACK: To support Mike Roche's heroin habit.

JR: Is that for the record?

JACK: Fuck, we'll give the real story!

RON: The money's already gone. Look, he's not here right now (Roche inexplicably blew off sound check) It's bad man, it's really bad. It's been like that going on three years now.

JR: Is that how all this came about?

JACK: That's how this all started. He's been getting high, right? And they (modern TSOL, which Mike was in until very recently) went to go on tour, and the other guy, the other guitar player, he was getting high too, and they were all freaking out, there was a lot of tension, and then the tour fell apart. And Roche had already been advanced his money for it, so now he owed a lot of money. So he went to GARY TOVAR (L.A. "Goldenvoice" promoter), who'd been hitting him up about doing a reunion show, and so he said "Fuck, give me some up front money and I'll get those guys together and we'll do a reunion show." And that's how it came about, seriously!

RON: That's how it came about, I got a message from Roche saying "I know I said I'd never play with Jack again, but, we're down here at Goldenvoice, we're having a meeting, we want to have a show and we want to know if you want to play." That was the first thing I heard officially. I actually heard about it from some kids, some skaters, but then I got that message, and I didn't hear again from him until 2 weeks before the show!

JR: I heard a wild rumor you got \$15,000 for the show. (at 20 bucks a head, for 2-3000 people, they would have deserved that!)

RON: Nah, no, that's a high estimate.

JACK: More like \$18,000 (laughs).

JR: So he went and said you'd play before he consulted the other 3 of you?

RON: Pretty much! What he did was, he called me and said that's he'd spoken to the other 2, and everybody wanted to do it. I thought it might be fun. My new band plays old T.S.O.L. songs that I wrote, and Jack's band plays some old T.S.O.L. songs (and last I saw them, the current T.S.O.L. does too!), so we do it anyway.

JACK: We did the show because we wanted to do it. For fun. Roche did it because he wanted the money.

RON: Speaking of money, did you hear that they paid off (the modern) T.S.O.L., to JOE and MITCH \$1000 to let him play this show?

JR: What? Were they going to sue or something?

RON: They weren't going to let him do it. Then the funny thing is, they ended up kicking him out of the band anyway! I don't know, they're being real babies about it. It's really weird.

JR: So you just did last week and today, and that's it? No temptation to do more if someone offers you a whole bunch of money?

RON: That's it! After we waded through all the stress and the bullshit, though, that was definitely fun to play last week.

JACK: I would have thought twice. Looking back if I would have weighed them all out...And the money's gone, I'm broke already, so the money doesn't matter. Fuck man!

RON: I definitely thought twice!

JR: Did it feel strange playing the old songs?

RON: It was hard to hear. It was just like old times, monitors were out the first song. It was pretty wild.

JR: How much rehearsal did you do?

JACK: We rehearsed 3 times, probably a total of 3 hours of rehearsal, for the last 7 years of not playing! But Roche knew them all! (they both laugh; Roche was the only one who seemed to have forgotten them all at the show!)

JR: He seemed to have the most problems.

JACK: Yeah. And I didn't know what was happening. The stage kept turning around (for one song, it was revolving theater in the round. Fortunately, after that first song, the stage stopped revolving!) I didn't know where I was.

JR: Whose idea was it to play in the round like Yes at the Garden or something?

RON: Gary Tovar.

JACK: I thought it was kind of cool until it made me sick! I don't know why. Then it stopped.

JR: So whose idea was it to play here at this tiny place, particularly a free show after you drew a few thousand at \$20 last week! Aren't you afraid of a repeat of the S.I.R. riot in '82!

RON: No. I don't know, Jack wasn't supposed to announce it from the stage the other night (it was listed in the L.A. Weekly too!) (laughs)

JACK: We were supposed to record a live LP last week. I thought, as long as we're getting a little money, we might as well get some more. And do a live record at the same time. But they wanted \$2500 to record one night's work, and that's fucked. So then we got this place.

JR: So you'll record tonight, assuming Roche finally shows up.

RON: And remembers the songs. We might reduce the set list a bit. We'll take whatever works.

JACK: I hope the shit gets knocked over. That always sounds great on live LPs. Waanannnnng!

JR: What will you do if this show gets stopped like the S.I.R. one, the cops close down the show for no reason, and you've only played a few songs?

JACK: We'll run a live mic out on the street and start busting windows.

RON: It'll be a live EP or single!

JR: What label do you intend to release this on?

RON: XXX/Enigma.

JACK: Which is funny, 'cause the guys in the (current) T.S.O.L. tried to stop us from doing this. They were saying, "Don't do it, none of those old records sell, nobody cares, fuck it, nobody wants that, nobody wants that." And then their record company Enigma calls up XXX on the phone and says "We hear you're putting out a live record and we want a part of it." (all laugh)

JR: This whole thing gets more confusing by the moment. 2 T.S.O.L.'s!

JACK: Yeah, but they own the world. We just own this little area right here. That's what Joe told my mom today. "I own the world. You guys just own Anaheim." He's married to my sister. We live in the same house!

JR: What! That really complicates matters doesn't it!

JACK: Yeah, you can hear 'em, they're in their room and I'm in mine, I'm doing my business on my phone, he's doing his on his. You can hear both of us yelling about the same thing (all laugh). "That motherfucker, he doesn't get anything!" Then we see each other and it's "Hey, do you want a cup of coffee or something, or a sandwich?" (all laugh) We don't talk business!

JR: You just pretend it doesn't exist!?!?

JACK: We just don't talk about it, ever. Nothing. Peter from XXX was freaking because he had to come over here, he thought it would be a really big scene, but everyone's just sitting around laughing. I think they're kind of worried. They don't like to discuss things with me anyway. 'Cause sometimes

I have a hard time talking rationally.

JR: Would you say it's true that your show at Celebrity Theater greatly outdrew recent T.S.O.L. shows by the current lineup?

RON: Yes.

JACK: Yeah, their last two shows, like the one they had at the Green Door last night had a minuscule amount of people, and the one in San Diego got canceled. We had 2278 paid for our gig (and plenty of freebees too, the lists were pages long!). We have bigger dicks too.

RON: And you notice how many young kids were at our show. It was funny.

JR: So what's the name of your band now Ron?

RON: LUNCH BOX. As in Lydia's.

JR: I see. Like the Dead Boys' "I Need Lunch." (also about Lydia). How close are you to making a record?

RON: We just got dropped from Capitol. With everyone else who got dropped at once.

JR: Had you ever put out anything before the ax fell?

RON: No we have an album cover on the wall of this club over there, but it never got released. 2 times! We own the recordings though. We did 3 different demos for them.

JR: The guy who signed you got dumped?

RON: Everyone that was on the deal got dumped.

JR: And you're still in TENDER FURY Jack?

JACK: Yeah, we have an LP out in January (unfavorably reviewed elsewhere).

JR: Did anyone ask GREG KUEHN (keyboard player, last 2 records with this lineup, instrumental in the greatness of Beneath The Shadows) to be a part of this reunion?

JACK: I called him. I told him it was impossible for us to do it, because Roche can hardly remember the easier songs. But Greg laughed, he thought it was funny. He came down there and couldn't get in! I put him on but I forgot to put him on plus one, and he didn't have \$20 to get his wife in.

JR: Did you think that was the best lineup of your T.S.O.L.? Or did you just think it was an experiment of sorts?

JACK: It was kind of sketchy. That would have probably ended anyway, even if the band had stayed together. 'Cause he was from a different field than where we were from.

RON: Night and day.

JACK: He was a trained musician, a church kind of boy. That kind of stuff.

JR: How did he blend so well with you on the records?

RON: Jack corrupted him, started showing him how you don't play keyboards. (both laugh)

JACK: Fuck that shit! He got mad sometimes, but...

JR: He just declined to participate in this?

JACK: No, he would have wanted to do it! He said he did. I talk to him all the time, but we don't really know all the songs he plays on, except "Wash Away" or "Send My Thoughts," it's too hard to get Roche to learn them. And we didn't even play "Send My Thoughts" last week 'cause it was sketchy. And we'd have to split the money another way! (all laugh).

JR: I thought the reason why you only played "Wash Away" from that LP was because Greg wasn't there, but in actual fact, he wasn't there because you didn't learn that material?

JACK: We couldn't even play "80 Times" 'cause it was too hard. This is sketchy, you don't understand!

JR: 3 hours of rehearsal, I understand!

JACK: This is what people don't understand. People always ask me why I quit T.S.O.L., I'd say you don't understand, that band was a fucking nightmare! Every time!

RON: I agree man!

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JACK: We couldn't even play a show without problems. S.I.R., the cops come it's a riot. Hollywood Palladium, people getting their heads kicked in. Everywhere we went it was fucking trouble. Last show we did we played under the name "Lost" on a rainy Wednesday night at the Cathay De Grande (small club on Selma, not far from Raji's), and I was having a nervous breakdown. I couldn't handle it.

JR: What about that last '83 tour which included that (great!) show at Gildersleeves in New York. You were supporting an album that wasn't popular with the punk scene, in fact, it was completely trashed in many of the punk mags. Yet you were still huge here. Did your draw diminish in the rest of the country as a result of Beneath The Shadows, but not here? Did that lead to your disbanding?

RON: L.A. was always twice as big as anywhere else anyway. Shows here were always a lot bigger compared to NY. Most of the places stayed the same, not real big at all, the new lineup made no difference.

JACK: Here a lot of people came not because they liked the music, but because they wanted to see what would happen. We played the Ukrainian Cultural Center, and the catwalk fell down, smashed a lot of people, and then I swung out on the rope and almost broke my back. (both laugh) And riot at S.I.R., you'd go just to see what would happen, out there they just had the records, they didn't hear about the live shows.

JR: Where was your scene from the movie Suburbia shot?

JACK: A club called Gods here in Hollywood. It was a fake deal all the way through, set up for the movie. It was stupid. So fucking stupid.

JR: They wouldn't go to one of your crazy shows and film.

RON: Nah, too chaotic. Stage slamming, it was all premeditated!

JACK: Even that bit where I throw the mike and it hits that guy in the head? I throw it over and it actually lands on a mattress. But the funny thing is I was actually standing on the chord. So when I threw it it did hit some guy in the head, it didn't go as far as it was supposed to! It just whacked him. Oh well.

JR: And that's the only version of "Darker My Love" that came out, recorded at that gig for the movie.

JACK: Actually, we recorded a whole nother album after Beneath The Shadows with that on it, before we split.

JR: What?!? What happened to it?

RON: Jack's got it. I don't even have a tape of it.

JR: Why don't you put that out on XXX!

JACK: It was all done. I don't know.

JR: How does one get a tape of this!

1980: T.S.O.L. 12"
EP (Posh Boy)

1981: DANCE WITH
ME (Frontier)





1982: WEATHERED
STATUES 7" EP (A.T.)



BENEATH THE SHADOWS

1982: BENEATH THE
SHADOWS (A. Tentacles)

JACK: It's pretty good! "Darker My Love" is on it. It's like 6 songs. It was to be another EP. It was a scene man, we fucked that place up. I wiggled out and had a candy fit, I busted the candy machine. At Perspective studios. **TODD** stole the drum set there, we ran up a big bill and no one could pay (longtime T.S.O.L. producer) **THOM WILSON**, and he just got all pissed off an he took the tapes. And everyone just ran off and left!

JR: How did you get them back, you pay up?

JACK: No, actually Wilson still has them. He'd do it though if we give him the money.

JR: Todd was actually thrown in jail later for stealing stereo equipment, right?

JACK: Yeah, and he's getting ready to go back. He hasn't learned his lesson, man! Fuck! He was just in jail on Monday, right before the show!

JR: Didn't Tender Fury play a show with the modern T.S.O.L. while Ron was still with them?

RON: Yeah, at The Scream here.

JACK: That was a good show. It was all fucked up. I was partying too much, I was too fucked up, I had no clue.

RON: Jack was fucked up all right. I'll back him up on that.

JACK: I was drinking all day and taking valiums. I was out of it! I remember them taking me down there, and I was just nodding, and they brought out a bunch of cocaine and they said, "Here, do as much of this as you can." And I was passed out but I was wide awake. I have a video of that show, someone threw a bottle and it hit me right in the face, I barely noticed! I was gone.

JR: So here you are, you do this show, and 9/10 of the audience is under 18. Strange.

JACK: I like that. Underage girls! Money and underage women, that's why I gave my number out. (Jack actually gave out his home number to close to 3000 people at that show)

JR: Your mother will never forgive you.

RON: That's why she's got her own line now!

JACK: She likes it.

RON: That's like when Jack's mom found the lyrics to "Code Blue" when he wrote that (the song is about the pleasures of necrophilia), she freaked out, she said "Jack, what the hell is this." He told her I wrote it! I come over the next day, his mom is like "I don't want you in my house!" I didn't know what was going on.

JACK: My mom has put up with a lot of shit. She's used to it by now. It's mellow now.

JR: What do you do for a living now, Ron?

RON: I work on elevators. Fun stuff. I've been doing that for 4 or 5 years off and on. I used to work in manufacturing, now I run a warehouse and repair stuff. Escalators too. I go on site.

It's good money. I'm not union right now, I used to be but I'm not. I never finished school.

JR: What training do you need?

RON: I had to take welding, mathematics, a lot of different stuff.

JR: And you're still unemployed Jack? (yes) How long now? When was the last time you had a job?

JACK: I used to sell cars!

JR: I wouldn't buy a car from you if you were giving it away for free!

JACK: I sold a lot of cars!

RON: He stole a lot, is more like it.

JACK: I was driving them around late night, and bringing them back the next morning.

RON: We used to go to the car dealer right across from Todd's, right by the movie theater. Jack would jump in, key in it, start it, back it into the wall, and get out and run while we're walking down the sidewalk. "What the fuck is going on?"

JR: How much truth is their in the rumor that people you knew beat up **ROBBIE FIELDS** who runs Posh Boy Records, the label that released your first LP, 'cause he supposedly didn't pay you?

JACK: I beat him up!

RON: Jack did, I witnessed it. Stuart did too, at Galaxie's Roller Rink.

JACK: I drove his car off a three foot high curb. I was kicking it in. Piece of shit. Beat his fucking ass, fat bastard.

JR: Any reaction to his recent retrospective release of your old songs, *Thoughts of Yesterday '81-'82*?

JACK: We ought to sue him. We sued him for the original EP and won. They're still paying royalties on the new one though. Yeah, I beat him up, that's the way to do it. I could put this record business back in line if they just gave me a chance (laughs).

JR: Jack declares Marshall law on record companies.

JACK: Fucking beat everyone's ass, fucking get a bunch of my friends who are basically just thugs.

JR: Jack, I'll never sign you to any record company I ever have! So this reunion is just a blast, and then you go back to doing what you normally do.?

RON: Yeah, I've got to go to practice right now, as a matter of fact. Practice with my other band. Mike Roche blew it. Never showed up. No sound check tonight. When you hear this album it's going to be as live as it gets! (all three laugh)

JR: Play the songs you know the least first, so the sound man has a chance to get it down!

RON: We'll play stuff no one even knows, Mike will just be going "Woah, wait a minute!"

JACK: We'll work up a set list the likes of which God himself has never seen.

RON: I've got to go practice man. Too bad, I wish I had more time.

JR: Thanks Ron, thanks Jack. Jack, give out your home address from the stage tonight! Then your Mom will throw you out for sure.

JACK: No, it's mellow! Everything's mellow.

CHAMELEONS/SUN AND THE MOON

MARK BURGESS interview, PART 3 (transcribed once again by **CAROLINE PARI**)

Part one of this interview appeared in Issue #26, and part 2 was in the last one, issue #27. I had thought at the time that the interview was concluded with the close of part 2 and labeled it so. However, soon thereafter, I discovered a forgotten second tape that contained an additional 40 minutes of conversation. Keeping in mind the overwhelming response to the first 2 parts of the interview, it was decided at the risk of turning this into an epic of Homeric proportions, to print this section as well. Although the majority of the startling



(L-R MARK BURGESS, REG SMITHIES, JOHN LEVER, DAVE FIELDING)

THE CHAMELEONS BACKSTAGE AFTER THE LAST SHOW OF THEIR FIRST U.S. TOUR, DANCETERIA, AUGUST , 1984. THIS PHOTO IS FROM THE SESSION THAT PRODUCED THE BARELY VISIBLE PICTURE ON THE BACK OF THE STRANGE TIMES LP (COVER BIG T 22) (Photo: Bonnie Graham)

revelations about the demise of Chameleons and Sun and The Moon are contained in part 1, and to a lesser extent, part 2, the following contents still should be of great interest to those who enjoyed the other parts, as well as those reading here for the first time. For a short history of the two groups, and a more general introduction to this interview, we refer you to issue #26; in any case, if you enjoy this part, you'll probably want to read that as well (as that's the most extraordinary part), and it's still available (Back issue info: page 3).

NOTE ON A POSSIBLE PART 4: You see, I was cleaning out my tapes, a big mistake! Not only did I thus encounter this tape of part 3, but I also discovered a cassette of an '85 interview done over the phone with Mark, not long after the 2nd Chameleons LP was released, the results of which have never been published. Conducted on behalf of Interview magazine and dutifully submitted, the story alas never ran. Naturally, I considered running it in Issue 29. However, I'm not sure how much interest this would be to you the reader, so I'll leave it to public opinion: If you would like to see this run in Issue #29 in December, write us and say so. Write "I am a glutton and want more punishment." As well, if you think this is becoming a saga to rival General Hospital, and you'd just as soon see us move on to other subjects let us know. We will decide accordingly in deference to your wishes.

Again, my thanks to Mark for his time and candid answers, to all those who have written and expressed your untiring affection for Mark and co.'s work, and most of all to Caroline, poor girl, who has

become so familiar with Mark's voice she feels like he's an old friend. Enjoy this final part.

MARK BURGESS INTERVIEW-- Tape 2
(otherwise known as "the interview that never ended" Hey Jack these tapes are appearing from nowhere, Have you taken magic lessons from my sister?)

JR: How much of "On the Beach" was inspired by Nevil Shute? I'd almost think none, judging from the lyrics.

Mark: None of it.

JR: You just appropriated the title of the book?

Mark: No. It wasn't anything to do with the book either. The beach in question is a storm beach at Loch Ness in Scotland where I used to hang out.

JR: So you've not read the book?

Mark: No. I've seen the film.

JR: Well I read the book, but I never saw the film. Just coincidence then. It's funny because it's a book I think you'd really like.

Mark: Yeah, I like those kind of scenarios. I find them interesting. The best one I've read is called Earth ? about this guy who walks out of his house one day and everyone's gone, there's not a soul. You never find out what happened. It's just about how he survives and becomes the gravitational center of another community. They all start to gravitate towards him and this community

develops. The first thing they learn is that by living on tin food they start getting run down so they have to find fresh food. Nothing very exciting happens in the book but it's so interesting! so fascinating!

JR: Sounds like a "Twilight Zone" episode.

Mark: Yeah. Right from the first chapter he carries this hammer and axe around with him. He has it for so long. He has it for the remainder of his life. The community attaches a symbolic significance to the carrier of the hammer, because he's the leader. And then he gets old and his old age starts taking him and stuff. The younger ones who've been born in the community start putting out all these occult symbolisms to the carrier of this hammer. It's really interesting stuff. I think it's the most accurate thing I've read of what would actually happen in that situation. You know what I mean? Like a few people arrived and had the first serious crime. How did he cope with it? What did he do about it? He tried banishment and that didn't work. There's a real dilemma. How to prevent crime? End of civilization scenarios fascinate me to no end. I must be hankering for the end of the world.

JR: Have you ever read Crash by J.G. Ballard?

Mark: No. I've read America by J.G. Ballard.

Have you read that?

JR: No, I haven't had the chance.

Mark: And I've read Empire of the Sun. Read that before Spielberg ruins it! I did that and enjoyed it very much.

JR: You've said from stages that "A Person Isn't Safe Anywhere" is about a friend of yours who had his head kicked in.

Mark: About me. I got my head...

JR: You did?

Mark: Well, it's not about me. It refers to a beating of an old lady. We have this trend, all of a sudden, of young folks breaking into the houses of old people, and not content with just robbing them of their possessions, they had to go and batter and rape them as well. The monsters, not people, you see I don't think of them as people, I think of them as monsters. Like the monsters of me youth, when I was child I used to imagine these monsters, and I think these monsters are in these people. That they could do something like that to defenseless old ladies! That was what the song dealt with. (Note: he refers to the use of the word "monsters" in the song itself) But, initially, I was walking down the road, four or five miles down this road here, on my way somewhere one night and five guys stopped their car, got out, opened the boot, took out pick-axe handles and various bricklaying tools and proceeded to way me in with them for no reason. There was no provocation at all, other than the way I was dressed. I had spiked hair. I was only like 16 or 17. They just kicked the shit out of me.

JR: You're lucky you weren't killed.

Mark: I thought I was going to die. He went like this to me head (gestures) and I thought it was the hammer and he hit me, it was the pickaxe handle, it was wood. But I thought it was the hammer that was coming. I thought I was going to die. This is it, bye-bye. Oh! you should have seen me. I was a mess.

JR: I'm glad I didn't see you!

Mark: I was with Ken at the time and he got the number of the car. He dragged me over to the phone box and he's phoning for the police but the [guys in the] car saw him and stopped and came over to the phonebox. We just ran into the woods. Eventually we flagged the police down. Ken was telling them what happened and gave them the car's number. And they didn't do anything. They said, "What do you expect if you go out dressed like that?" We didn't expect to get fucking killed! Ken asked them, "You mean you're not going to get him into the hospital. He might have a fractured skull." "Uh, well if you want to go to the hospital, I'm afraid you'll have to get there yourself." I still suffer from headaches. Ever since then I've had headaches and I've had really serious memory lapses and absent-mindedness. I'm sure it's related to that.

JR: The compassion on the part of the policemen was overwhelming.

Mark: Yeah, great concern from them. Didn't even give me a lift to the station.

JR: This is your punk rock past.

Mark: The police said, "It's done now. It's done, isn't it." I said, "Yeah, but they might do it to someone else. Take the number down!" He was quite happy to let these creeps ride around loose.

JR: That's ridiculous! You shouldn't have had to argue with him. This wasn't even something like some dumb gang warfare or like Teddy boys.

Mark: These guys were bricklayers on their way home from the pub. "Oh, there's a punk, let's do him in."

JR: They were probably drunk. What happened to Ken?

Mark: He was all right.

JR: They left him alone?

Mark: Well, he ran.

JR: You couldn't run fast enough?

Mark: Well, what happened was that one of them grabbed me. The guy who grabbed me wasn't actually in the car. That was it. He got hold of me and pushed me against the fence. This little fat kid, he didn't get off. As I was stuck there, the car pulled up and the others got out of it. And I saw the lad the next night. I was with the Years drummer, Sid. He says, "Come on we'll go up and have a pint at the college." So we went there and I saw the lad that grabbed me. Sid wanted to do him in but I said, "Leave it." I mean my face was out here (gestures). The next minute, four guys from the rugby team walk over and say, (in a low tone) "I believe you was causing trouble last night with this lad, you better leave." I was causing trouble? I said, "Have you seen this? (his face) Go and have a look at your mate!" I said, "Come on, we better go." Sid's going, "We'll have 'em, we'll have 'em." I said you can't take on the rugby team. I preferred to just leave it, put it down as experience. There's a song in it anyway.

JR: What a tradeoff!

Mark: I've had enough money from the PRS (royalties) on that song anyway so it probably compensates.

JR: That's making something out of it, I guess.

Mark: You've got to be philosophical about it.



JR: I still can't believe it.

Mark: And you live in New York! Isn't that rough?

JR: They don't even do that. It's usually more like a drug rubout and I don't do drugs so I'm not that worried. It might happen to me someday.

Mark: I hope not.

JR: That makes two of us.

Mark: (about the cafe we're sitting in) They let you put your own chocolate in (the cappuccino). And they let you park your bike right next to the table. I mean, where are you going to get cafes like that these days? Best coffee in the north of England.

JR: I don't drink three cups of coffee very often in one day.

Mark: This is a luxury for me being able to come here now because I live so far away now and I'm rarely at the studio (Suite 16, formerly Cargo Studios, where Chameleons and Sun and The Moon did most of their recording).

JR: You have a good bike.

Mark: It's not bad.

JR: Why wasn't Strange Times produced by Colin Richardson?

Mark: After we finished What Does Anything Mean, Basically? he disappeared. We never saw him again.

JR: Really? Whose choice was Dave Allen?

Mark: All of us. It came to our attention that Dave Allen had been approached by Geffen along with John Brand and we met John Brand going to record so we talked to him (Allen) again, and he said no, you can't go.

JR: Why didn't you change producers?

Mark: I don't know.

JR: Call up John Brand again.

Mark: Geffen started lying to me about the availability of the studios as well, so it put us off.

JR: How do you know they were lying?

Mark: Because I spoke to John Burgess who runs the place and he said, "We were expecting you." Because we got on really well with him when we were out there. They really loved the idea of us going out. They were looking forward to the Chameleons coming because we were real people not like (mocks pompously) "I don't think much of this." We

weren't like that at all, we were dead down to earth, same as them. So the person who runs the studio is from Doncaster but they're really down to earth northerners, they really liked us, they were waiting for us to go out there. As far as they were concerned it was all set. Geffen was lying which was a dirty trick to play on us. He's not a nice man, Tom (last name unclear, sounds like "Ze-tah," or "Ze-ter," who Mark is accusing here.) It was awkward because his younger brother is an actor out there and is one of my best friends and he can't stand it. It's dead awkward.

JR: In retrospect, are you happy with the production of Strange Times?

Mark: No, not entirely.

JR: I thought it was rather dark, considering how the material sounded live. It was unnecessarily dark, although it remains my favorite album mostly because of the material and the performances.

Mark: Yeah, I agree with you Jack. It left a bit to be desired. I didn't like what Allen did. But he was able to push me well which I need as a singer sometimes. And for a long time Dave pushed me a lot because he was always in the studio (Jacobs) working and he'd always push me which was great for me as a performer. I'd get better. It was Dave Allen who did that and I needed that to get the most out of myself. The way he's produced the backing vocals and stuff, I'm not happy with. I much preferred it live. The live was always better than the studio.

JR: What about those two tracks that were supposed to be the B-side of "Mad Jack" that ended coming out on the American version of the album? Was that true, they were supposed to be B-sides? The Beatles cover... .

Mark: Yeah, they were just extra things. When we were working we'd get into a bit of a rut, so we'd do something to shake it up. Like "John, I'm Only Dancing" was done in an hour.

JR: It sounds like it, too.

Mark: Yeah, right. But it's good for that, it's fresh. It's different. John wasn't playing the drums for that, he was playing his drum cases.

JR: (chuckles) Mixed drum cases!

Mark: And it just shakes it all up. The video for that is great as well, but I haven't got it. Dave Allen filmed us in the studio and then edited it and put the soundtrack over it digitally. I'd love to see that, Tony [Fletcher]'s in it.

JR: I've seen the Camden Palace video.

Mark: Sally's in it. There's a girl who I give some Ribino [a drink] to at the front. And there's a tall girl who takes it and Sally's the girl next to her. Could go off on her like this for hours.

JR: It's too bad there weren't any videos of any later gigs particularly with the second and third album material.

Mark: (pauses) There isn't, no there isn't. There's only two that I know of. One's a bootleg of the Free Trade Hall in Manchester and the other one is a program. A concert filmed with interviews spliced in and it's a TV program called, Arsenal. That's the only other thing I've seen.

JR: Yeah, Richard (Lysons, who helps out Imaginary Records) was telling me about that. Here's another funny little question: Considering what "A Person Isn't Safe" is



about were you amused when the Smiths came out with "Sweet and Tender Hooligan?"

JR: Never even occurred to me really. I like that song. I like the part where he goes, "And he'll never, never, never, never do it again. Not until the next time." (Jack laughs).

JR: Well, you were always a big fan of theirs weren't you?

Mark: Right from the first single.

JR: Did you see a lot of their early gigs around here?

Mark: I only saw them once and that was at the Palace.

JR: Yeah, Brand was really into you. I remember seeing him at your Danceteria show. He's a real favorite of mine from his work with The Ruts and the 1st Aztec Camera LP.

Mark: We blew him out twice. We were going to work with him on two occasions and both times we blew him out. In favor of someone else. But Dave Allen liked our stuff. Reg was the Cure expert actually because his girlfriend liked them so he knew all their records and everything. I was easy, I just liked him as a bloke. My only gripe was that he didn't want to go to Montserrat in the Caribbean.

JR: Where?

Mark: About thirty miles from Antigua.

JR: And that's where you wanted to make the record?

Mark: Yeah, we'd been there. We were lucky enough to go there with Tony. It's a long story but basically we went there to meet Geffen and they paid the bills and got us out there to meet Thomas (from Geffen). Their studio is out there, Montserrat.

JR: Talking Heads have recorded there.

Mark: Caribbean for a week, it was just heaven, paradise! So the A&R bloke at Geffen said we were preparing the Strange Times material and he said if we could get finished by such and such a date, get all the songs ready and we like them you could record your LP here in Montserrat. I went back to the others and said, "You will not believe what he's just told me." I said, "if we get everything done on the right day we can go to Montserrat and record." We were all excited.

It was especially bad for Dave (Fielding) because his brother (Colin) was in a really bad way at the time although I remember I didn't have much sympathy at the time because I was, I have to be honest, I was more concerned with getting the material done than I was with anything else. So he was having a real tough time of it. So me and Reg and John were really pulling it together. We got it done for the right time and yeah they loved the stuff. But Dave Allen changed his mind. Previously I had said to him at the meeting just out of curiosity I said to him if we meant recording it at Monserrat, would you? He said, "I wouldn't mind the Caribbean." It was all set and everything. And then we just said that's where we're

JR: Manchester Palace? By then they were pretty popular, right?

Mark: Yeah. Dave went to a lot of their gigs. They played at Dingwall's in London and stuff. I don't know why I didn't go.

JR: Maybe you didn't get to many gigs or something.

Mark: Yeah. I can get apathetic like that. I'm going to a gig tonight actually.

JR: Poppinjays?

Mark: Yes. Going to see the Poppinjays

JR: I'm going to see the Learning Process.

Mark: Oh, if you see Dermot, say hello, tell him sorry I couldn't make it but I promised to be at the Poppinjays who are friends of mine. They phoned me up and asked me to go. It's always the same with the Learning Process, they always pick days when I'm committed to do something else.

JR: Yeah, it happens. There's a band like that in America I've done that to. Really good friends of mine who I've never seen

play, because they always play the same nights as us. (Mark asks about Springhouse, requests a tape of them, finds out Jack's a drummer and tells him he might ring him up one day. "Uh, Jack, are you doing anything?" Jack tells story of John Figler of Lord John, who returned to England a month or two after a UK visit to play with Steve Diggle and F.O.C., and UK immigration would only allow him in for a week. Mark says it's the same with Poppinjays)

JR: Were you familiar with John Brand's work with the Ruts, Aztec Camera and people like that?

Mark: Yes.

JR: I'm surprised you blew him off then. He was so into the Chameleons when I met him at Danceteria. I thought, "oh, that would be a great marriage." He's a really fresh sounding producer. Maybe one of your future records.

Mark: Maybe, I don't know. I'll work with anyone I can get at the moment. (sadly) Everyone's walking out on me. It makes me feel very insecure.

JR: Don't take it so hard! I'm sure plenty of people want to work with you! Think of all those zillions of people who've seen you perform. They used to say that at every Who gig there would be 6-700 people hoping Keith Moon would collapse so they could take his place what with him being such a roaring alcoholic. It happened more than once and once people found out about that they were ready. They were probably rehearsing at home, just in case.

Another MARK BURGESS photo by DARREN VICKERS
THE MOON gig, Legends Club, Warrington U.K., February 24, 1989

Mark: I did a gig in the High Club in London. It was a charity gig for children in need, like this national event the BBC did. So in the morning, I just didn't have a voice. It was like: (imitates sound fainter than a whisper). There was nothing there. The guys wanted to blow it out but I said we couldn't blow it. I dragged them to the gig, opened up my mouth and my voice had come back by that time. So we went on. Sold all my Chameleons singles collection. Sold all that to raise money for them. By the time we got on stage, nothing! I couldn't sing! There was this lad from the audience who came on and we did some Sun and the Moon songs, a few Chameleons' numbers, we did "Don't Fall." He sounded like me. The guy had my voice! He was brilliant. That was on video as well. He could do it all the time when I want a night off. He knew all the words and everything. He saved the gig.

JR: How many songs did you do, like eight or nine?

Mark: Yeah. Did "Childhood" and a few other songs. Andy Whit sang a few of his songs. And I ended up with this (points to) can you see the scar?

JR: Oh yeah, I can see it.

Mark: I was so drunk. The mike stand was in the way and I went like that to move it because I kept bumping into it and I banged it down and it bounced off the stage and hit my head SMACK! I had to have 6 stitches in my head. It was a bad day. Good gig, though.

JR: You have met the mike stand and the mike stand won!

Mark: Definitely.

JR: You were losing your voice on the American tour, too, I remember.

Mark: Was I?

Yes. Particularly the Cleveland show, you were kind of hoarse. You kept apologizing after the gig.

Mark: Felt good by the time we finished. I could have done another 30 dates. Usually I'm shagged by the end of it.

JR: The Rolling Stones did a television gig once on Saturday Night Live and Mick Jagger had the closest thing to laryngitis and they still didn't cancel. It was almost embarrassing listening to him sing. His voice was obviously hurting him so much.

Mark: With me though, it was psychological.

JR: I thought you were just blowing out your voice from singing every night.

Mark: Well, this is one of the reasons why we insisted on adequate monitors. The worse the monitors are the more you have to shout. The more you shout, the more your voice goes. And then you have to cancel dates which doesn't do anyone any good. It's better for a promoter to lay out the extra bread and get good monitors. They think they can't afford it but they should put out a little extra. What you lose on the swings, you gain on the roundabouts. The alternative is to skimp on the monitors and that means you have to cancel dates and you lose lots of money that way. It's logical. That's one of the reasons why we always insisted on top class monitors.

JR: Particularly when you play big places. It's really crucial to have a decent PA and monitor system.

Mark: And concert's aren't cheap these days.

are they? You owe it to the people that come to see you to be the best that you can be.

JR: Anything you want to add in closing? I usually give people a chance if there's anything they've been thinking about or anything they want people to know. You're an Alternative TV fan, you know this, think of "Alternatives to Nato?" you've got your soapbox. Here's your ten minutes.

Mark: Yeah, but the thing is, have you ever read Dickens?

JR: (Laughs) Are you kidding? That's what I'm reading now. (pulls out a copy of "Great Expectations")

Mark: Now if you take this book, I don't know if you've got to it, but there's a little bit, the first time he goes to see Mrs. Havershim..

JR: Yeah, I've gotten to that part.

Mark: He goes in to see Mrs. Havershim and she says, "I want a little boy here to play." He goes there and she says, "Right, play." He says it's the hardest thing. Something a child normally does so naturally but can't do it when put on the spot. It's the hardest thing he's ever had to do. How do you play when you're told like that? I mean I've probably got like a thousand things I want to say to everybody. Right, what would you like to say? Dink! and I go....uh...have a nice day! Take it easy. Relax.

JR: Well, imagine you had to write a song in ten minutes. I know you've never been under that kind of pressure but just hypothetically.

Mark: In the magazine that we did, there was a little piece that I wrote and I said that if missiles were launched in this country it would take approximately three minutes to get here, what would you do in your last three minutes? It'd give you enough time to walk to the front door, open the front door, stretch and yawn, pick up the milk from the doorstep, look up at the sky, a beautiful, glorious, blue sky and say, "It's not going to rain today." Three minutes. That's all I've got to say.

JR: I might call up a few friends and say goodbye.

Mark: It would probably take you about three minutes to get through in this country the way the telecom is.

JR: I might say, well, in case we don't survive this...

Mark: Get an answering machine. I'm not here at the moment but if you care to leave a BANG!!...

JR: If I get back before the bomb drops, I'll be happy to return your call.

Mark: Kindly leave a message after the bang!

Mark asks about Jack's travel plans, brief discussion about Inspiral Carpets who Jack is to see that Friday, mention of Dave Fielding as talent scout, bands he promotes or produces have become popular. Quite to my astonishment the tape recorder is shut off! Our Manchester correspondent informs us that Jack and Mark are still sitting at the Cafe Remo holding this interview. Jack sends off the tapes intermittently through the mail. And I sit here transcribing them. Apparently Jack is on his 9,144 cup of coffee and Mark has just finished his 11,756 espresso with chocolate.

THE CURRENT PLANS OF MARK BURGESS:

The 2nd part of the Mark Burgess interview was great. Thanks again for doing that interview. I had never seen one or even an in depth article on The Chameleons/Sun and The Moon before yours. The last letter I got from Mark said that he and Sally were going to give up their house and live on the road as Gypsies because they are going to refuse to pay the newly required poll tax. He also said that he was going to be playing some dates in France in April with a French band "Les Enfants Terribles"--ALISON OVERTON, Raleigh, N.C.

Ed: Since this letter was received, there have been serious riots in England, in particular in Trafalgar Square in London in protest of the outrageous poll tax, which will increase the taxes of the average poor person. A grave problem for a Great Britain already suffering from two decades of serious economic problems.

HOLD THE PRESSES, ONE MORE UPDATE

The same Alison Overton just sent a postcard from Manchester with an update of Mark's activities, having met him there: "Mark's recorded 'You Only Live Twice,' the James Bond theme song he's covered for a 1967 Compilation for Imaginary Records. It sounds great! You'll love it. He's gone to Edinburgh to record his new album." Apparently, Mark has changed his mind about moving out of his home, too. Interesting. New LP? Great! At this point there's no info from the REEGS (including ex-CHAMELEONS DAVE FIELDING and REG SMITHIES) camp, though we're told they've parted company with the Imaginary label, so it's uncertain who they'll record for in the future should they remain together. To date they've not played any live gigs; this is rumored to be one of the contributing factors to their departure from Imaginary, who, like most indies, relies on live gigs for the bulk of their promotion. And drummer JOHN LEVER is in WEAVEWORLD, the band that's basically THE SUN AND THE MOON without Mark. ANDY CLEGG remains on guitar, ANDY WHIT moves to bass and takes over the vocals, and AKY is added on other guitar. New demos sound good, and the band played a few gigs round Manchester.

TOP 35 BEST RECORDS!

TOP 35 RECORDS

Here it is again, the section I dread. Someday I'll dream that I'm drowning, and I'm being attacked by sharks that look suspiciously like records by bands I've never heard of. Anyway, there's costs with benefits, so no whining this time. Time to rot my poor yellowing teeth again with that Pepsi junk, lock myself in with the stereo and just proceed with the barrage of semi-informed opinion! Here's the top 35, the records most worthy of your purchase and enjoyment as ranked by me. Criteria is amount played: I played House of Love the most, followed by Bad Religion 2nd most, and so on. The better the music, the more you play it, right? Why else would you blow the dough? Hope you like these 35 records (and 3 add-ons) as much as I!!!!!! It's a special buzz when a record invades your life and you can't wait to hear it again!



#1 HOUSE OF LOVE LP



#2 BAD RELIGION LP

THE HOUSE OF LOVE-FONTANA (PolyGram): Where did this come from? The first LP was good, no question about it, but again, where did this come from? Despite doubt-ridden hair-pulling, constantly scrapped recordings and inner turmoil that eventually led to the departure of guitarist TERRY (singer/guitarist GUY CHADWICK claims Terry barely played on the LP anyway), this unbelievably well crafted album is near-perfect! What this has, and so few others do, is a mood, a continual atmosphere of stillness, of calm, of placidity, yet this is no dull, mellow stoner music, this is rock/pop at its most radiant and vibrant. The drums gently cascade as if they were a lovely fountain. The bass is so softening and sensuous it's like a light kiss. Best of all, the guitars and Chadwick's suddenly seasoned, empathic, lulling voice weave through sweet, quiet passages in a deeply soothing float, it's like a damp towel on a burning forehead. Side one is perfection, we get 10-15 sides of music this perfect a decade. "Hannah" builds around guitars that shimmer and crackle like distant lightning, its as if they come from the depths of the subconscious, erupting suddenly out of the "this is not my sky" passages into buildups of clashing cymbals and bursting guitars. Just as that's dying out (you don't want it to), "Shine On" (the new version) dazzles right from the opening guitar line that dominates the later choruses. "Beatles and Stones" brings it back down into childish memories (that Guy can pull off a corny line like "The Beatles and The Stones made it good to be alone" and be understood completely is typical of this album's unusual excellence), before "Shake and Crawl" and "Hedonist" slither like a dessert lizard over swanky beats. The side closes with the puzzling "I Don't Know Why I Love You," guitars to the fore, and a melody so pure yet distinctive it sounds like nothing and everything you've heard. The side ends, and the effect is so paralyzing and numbing the silence is torturous, the effort to get up and turn it over formidable. Side Two is also excellent, if nothing could match side one. These selections roam more, drifting where they may unlike the tightly structured first half, yet added together they're almost as priceless. Each track swoons with unbounded joy until it's over, putting a sad end to one of the nicest three quarters of an hour you can enjoy by yourself. We spend our years foraging for masterpieces, and here at last is one, a work so resplendent it can knock you over and massage you at the same time. Like I said, where did this come from? Can I go there?

BAD RELIGION-NO CONTROL (Epitaph): Holy fuck! This is arguably the 2nd best hardcore record ever made, surpassed only by the Bad Brains' '81 ROIR Cassette LP. This genre is a musical form that died for most of us within a year or two of first hearing

it; Its limits are well encrusted and inevitably, what was once exhilarating and breathtaking slowly grows tiresome with repeated exposure, like a bad drug. Yet, in the way that people who detested most hardcore still admired Bad Brains (and to a lesser extent Minor Threat), No Control could blow away the most ardent anti-punk pop fan, and rekindle (if for but for this one half hour) the interest of former converts. The amazing thing is that this LP suffers from the same flaw that was '88's Suffer's only drawback (the overall lack of variety in tempos), yet this time it fails to diminish the impact! And what an impact! The recording is crystal clear, a tight, clean, pulverizing edge which bypasses the now trite grungy sound of contemporary HC and post-punk and makes each of these 16 tracks a killer. From the first blink, "A Change of Ideas" comes barging into your silent waiting and knocks whatever else was on your mind right out. The sheer overload of power meeting melody is just too much, a nervous shakeup that only gets more and more grabbing with "Big Bang" and the title track. Much attention has been paid here before to the sensational vocals of grad-student wonder-cynic **GREG GRAFFIN**, and the scary thing is he keeps getting better! Not even H.R. and Ian MacKaye could make such lovely melodies seem so damn natural amongst the chaos that is the otherwise hallmark of this stuff. He has an unbelievable voice, and the harmonies help; but really, it's his sing-song quality and ability to pronounce super-quick while holding his notes that's his triumph. The choruses of "The World Won't Stop" (perhaps the prettiest firestorm ever?!), "I Want to Conquer The World" and those first three cuts are so inspiring, it's hard to suppress the immediate desire to play them for every living creature, as if to say this will burn a hole in anything you've been listening to, no matter how precious! And then, with all this, there's the lyrics, which is another frightening world of its own. Co-writers Graffin and **Brett G.** are going beyond their usual "Orwellian" wake-up calls and general disgust for myopia, blindness and overall anti-thinking in our social order. Now they're starting to get personal! From "The World Won't Stop": "Your achievements are unsurpassed/you are highly-ordered mass/But you can bet your ass/Your free energy will dissipate... But the world won't stop without you." Ouch! Taking a twist on the selfish conception of being the center of the universe, it's also a reminder that if humans no longer inhabit the earth (for nuclear or environmental sins), the world won't miss us much! Everybody gets fried in this sizzling pan, not only the usual us-against-stupidity fat bodies like organized religion (organized brainwashing?), politicians, and other demagoguery and imitation, but me and you besides! It's hard not to feel a little skewered in "The Automatic Man" ("the quintessential mindless modern epicene"), or "Sanity" ("Insanity is a state of mind that you believe in sanity"), as if every lie you've ever clung to for stability had just been exposed giggling in your face. It's a tribute to their ability to put an almost comic strain in their uncompromising sociological view that this is not heavy-handed, doom-y and morose for the sake of painting black, but rather thoughtful, well supported, almost ironic catharsis. Yes, on first listen the songs after the first three can seem a little samey, but this time only 2 or 3 plays is required to convert a CD, tape or record disguised as a simple, harmless piece of music into a mind-shaking experience, a rollercoaster in your own armchair or bed that makes you feel like Linda Blair in you know what movie.

Now really, how many records have ever done that to you? Thrills don't come more instant.



#3 PALES SAINTS LP

#4 MORRISSEY single

THE PALES SAINTS-THE COMFORTS OF MADNESS (4AD UK): This LP is the surprise of the year so far for many reasons. First, their debut 12" of "Sight of You" was good, but nothing suggested greatness of this sort. Second, 4AD is a label we all admire, but this Leeds pop trio is the closest thing to fairly "normal" guitar/bass/drums/vocals pop they've ever signed. As expected, they're awash in ethereal elements like all their label mates, and on "A Deep Sleep For Steven" when they use a drum machine, they even approximate the trance like soundscapes of Cocteau Twins. And each song has long, languid, lavished, longing instrumental passages, lush lullabies for the lovesick. But what really distinguishes them is the intelligent songwriting, as they trade back and forth between the slow songs, their most gentle of passions ("A Deep Sleep For Steven," "Sea of Sound," "Little Hammer" and "Sight of You," which taken in context here is the most innocent and heart-wrenching unrequited lover's lament simply stated anywhere), and nimble, rapid, gushed faster ones, with dashes of Peter Hook like bass out of control. One song, their cover of **OPAL**'s "Fell From the Sun" does both, completely redoing the original by tripling the tempo on the chorus, which completely topples the original in directions Opal's foggy murk never considered. The vocals are so gently floating over these songs it's almost as calm and filled with splendor as a mid 60's Beach Boys vocal track; the singing on "Language of Flowers" and "Sight of You" have the power to make a cynic swoon like romance in June. This is a deeply affecting album, with all the arid sweetness of the country after a light rain, with all the bodiless peace of the waves on a deserted beach at night. Despite some of it's faster songs, it's also one of the best recordings to drift to sleep to at night in bed, there's something in its brew that soothes a hurried mind and busy-body at wind-down time better than any current recording. This unobtrusive LP is a cure for brooding normalcy, sighing relief.

MORRISSEY-"November Spawned a Monster" (Sire/WEA): This was supposed to be a pre-LP single for the followup to Viva Hate, but now we've heard Morrissey has scrapped the album, so these three songs are the only likely to appear from the sessions with producers **ALAN WINSTANLEY** and **CLIVE LANGER**. Too bad, this is fine stuff. The backing players are from each phase of Morrissey's career; ex-SMITHS bassist **ANDY ROURKE**, terrific Viva Hate drummer **ANDREW PARESI**, and from the more recent 45s, guitarist **KEVIN ARMSTRONG**. Without **JOHNNY MARR** or **STEPHEN STREET** now, Morrissey collaborates with producer Langer to write the a-side, and Rourke and Armstrong for one song each on the b-side. **MARY MARGARET O'HARA** makes a cameo, though one doesn't

notice her background banshee gurgles much. So much for the particulars. The singing is vintage Morrissey, a mixture of his bolder touches and hushed, semi-moaned flourishes, with a subject of archetypal compassion. In a pop world that spoons up phony, inaccessible glamour for the average un-glamorous, Morrissey's popularity endures because he addresses insecurities, doubts and social fears of inadequacy, with lines like "Sleep and dream of love/Cause it's the closest you'll ever get," or "And if the lights were out, could you even bear to kiss her full on the mouth, or anywhere?" Five years after "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now," this still strikes a big chord. Few verbalize for the stigmatized without patronizing, but even here when assuming the life of a handicapped girl ("useless limbs"...."a hostage to kindness and the wheels underneath her"), he can express sincere virtue for the societally prejudiced "ugly" without making it into a mawkish tearjerker, not an easy task! The music reminds more of Smiths than his previous solo work, behind Rourke's snapped bass lines, but the song itself is compelling through its various shifts, his best 45 since "Every Day is Like Sunday." B-sides have always been unusually juicy on every one of his 23 singles to date: "He Knows I Want to See Him" is the quiet radiance and blush he's done so well so often, the kind that makes sick puppies of the most hardened cynics and tough guys. Damn pretty. Frankly, (Mr. Shankley), there's a bit of a romantic in all of us! "The Girl Least Likely To" makes another "well done" claim for eccentricity (and books over people, the flipside of "Will Never Marry?"), with a couple of rockabilly yelps of "well" that'll catch old fans by surprise. 7 years, yet no lapse of remarkable quality from one of the few consistent greats of our era.



#5 WIPERS Best of LP



#6 MEGA CITY 4 EP

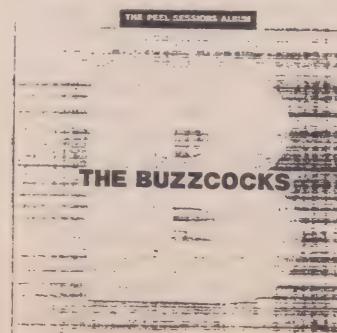
THE WIPERS-THE BEST OF THE WIPERS AND GREG SAGE (Restless): Wipers disbanded last year after over a decade of some of the greatest music ever recorded, but this will tide us over until the next 2nd Sage solo LP (first since Wipers quit) please let it be soon! 3 reasons this "best of" succeeds: 1)The sequencing is wonderful, showing off Wipers/Sage's multiple strengths more than any of their individual LPs even! With 7 LPs to choose from, the variety is non-stop and intriguing. The first 6 songs in particular fit so well together someone was on the ball here. 2)Despite the "best of" moniker, Restless is careful to throw in three obscuras even many dedicated fans find hard to locate. "Better Off Dead" is their heated debut 45 in '78, their most severe sounding record ever. The idiosyncratic "No Solution" is the flipside of their 3rd and final single from '82, "Romeo," (also included here) long out of print. The Hendrix-isms come to the fore on this one! And "My Vengeance" is from the long forgotten Trap Sampler Sage put out 9 years ago

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(NAPALM BEACH and PELL MELL are still going, funny enough, though DRUM BUNNY and Wipers aren't!). As well, the 2 cuts from Sage's exceptional, vastly different, sometimes even preferable (when one's in a serious introspective mood) '85 solo LP Straight Ahead will enlighten further the casual Wipers follower. 3)Wipers deserve this collection more than just about anybody. That this LP is so tremendous without even featuring their most awesome stuff (for instance, the devastating 10 and a half minute blockbuster masterpiece "Youth of America," the 2nd single "Alien Boy," "Over The Edge," "Doom Town," and even "Follow Blind," all classics of every Wipers tour) is a feat few bands could handle. I.E., a Volume 2 is in order! There are strangely no tracks from the first LP Is This Real?, perhaps Restless can't get the rights (though they did recently reissue the unbelievable '81 2nd LP Youth of America, originally on Park Ave. Records), but every other LP is represented, with a particular concentration on the fourth and fifth LPs; 7 of the 16 tracks are from '85's Land of The Lost and '86's Follow Blind, compared to only 1 each from Youth of America and the final '88 The Circle (too bad!) "Nothing Left to Lose," "Way of Love," "The Circle" and "Losers Town" sound killer for the hard stuff, while on the the murky side, "Someplace Else," "Soul's Tongue," and "Blue Cowboy" grab your soul, shake it good, and deposit it in a pile on the bed. Whether as an introduction, or a compliment, or even just an amusement to a has-it-all fan, this LP scores big. Please let us hear that Sage is in the studio as we speak! Please!

MEGA CITY FOUR-THERE GOES MY HAPPY MARRIAGE EP (7" + 12") (Decoy UK): Yes! Way to go! 5th single from MC4, this is hands down their best stuff to date! Already the premier punkish pop group in England, coming off Cramps opening slots (just to remind they're not '77 punk wanna-be's), with a fresh, enthusiastic attitude and sound but fragile and frustrated lyrics, these four cuts show they are finally ready to really branch out. "Finish," and "Square Through a Circle," their greatest moments so far, take up where "Stupid Way to Die" left off tempo wise, only these are far superior to that. The guitars are forceful and intriguing, and WIZ's vocals are as vulnerable without being sappy, but now they've got a lowdrive, and best of all, stand out harmonies to offer. Their maturation is a marvel to see, they've so advanced from their debut "Miles Apart" (only late '88!), yet they have all the same raw spirit. Even the two faster numbers, their more usual fare, are among the prizes of their canon, good timing for their first 12" single (they had to finally break down and issue in both formats; sad as it is, and it is deplorable, people would

#7 BUZZCOCKS BOX SET
LIVE + PEEL SES. LP



#8 HOLLIES '64-'66
EP COLLECTION LP



rather waste extra money and space buying 12"s when the 7" is so much more favorable). If you don't know this band, this is the place to start. If you do, geez, do you have a morsel waiting for you here! Exciting release! (231 Portobello Rd., London, W11 1LT UK)

THE BUZZCOCKS-THE PEEL SESSIONS LP (Strange Fruit UK), **PRODUCT** box set (Restless): The Peel Sessions are not not sensational. They're often overshadowed by the far more powerful, famous singles and LP versions; producer **MARTIN RUSHENT** is missing here! This is something to pick up after getting their other releases (95% of which can be found on the new Product box-set), yet there's still enough fantastic stuff here to merit purchase. It's made up of 4 Sessions, the first of which, from 9/7/77 was previously issued as a 3 song EP. The others, 4/10/78, 10/18/78 and the best one, 5/21/79, are all more interesting. The closing "E.S.P." is searing, perhaps the only version greatly superior to the EMI versions, in this instance Love Bites, though cases could be made for "Mad Mad Judy" (later on A Different Kind of Tension), which is even more jagged, and the two Love Bites instrumentals, "Late For The Train" and the only song ever written by bassist **STEVE GARVEY**, "Walking Distance." But any alternate versions by this everlasting powerhouse are obviously worth 11 bucks! If you don't have their regular LPs, run, no sprint, no fly, to any store that carries Product. Even if your collection was already complete you'll need this for the 8 live cuts found here only, recorded live at London's Lyceum over BBC radio in '78. All of these smoke, a far better indication of their unbelievable live power prowess than the good Lest We Forget ROIR cassette or the bad earlier compilation tracks (though, as mentioned previously, the definitive live recording still lies in WNEW New York's vaults, from their Palladium broadcast 12/1/79). As well, the box set is sensible enough to include "I Look Alone," a terrific obscurro previously found only on the excellent but long unavailable NME sampler cassette from 9 years ago, C-81. The song dates from the sessions that produced their last 3 singles; 7 songs were recorded, but only 6 made the singles (those were 7" days!). The box set features all the singles and the 3 LPs, but the original Spinal Scratch EP from 1/77, the band's debut and only record with founder **HOWARD DEVOTO** on vocals is absent. Why? This was their only release on their own New Hormones label (the first self-released punk record ever!), have they misplaced the master tapes or something? At any case, for the live tracks (and "I Look Alone," if you don't have it), this is another mandatory purchase from one of the greatest bands of all time, a well deserved box set. No real description of the music here; covered enough of that last issue! Note: Sparkling booklet with liner notes by **JON SAVAGE**, the journalist who inspired the title of Different Kind of Tension!

THE HOLLIES-THE EP COLLECTION (See For Miles UK): Documenting first 3 LP period Hollies, '64-'66, these seven four song 7" EPs form an essential collection, precisely because, like the recent Not The Hits Again LP, it's not the 17th greatest hits album! The best stuff here is mostly from the 3rd LP era (The Hollies, 1965), plus the best song on the 2nd LP (In The Hollies' Style, 1965), "To You My Love," which was the first **GRAHAM NASH** lead vocal ever! Yes, the later 60's Hollies stuff is far more important, culminating in the '67 Evolution and '67 Butterfly (in U.S.: "Dear Eloise"/"King Midas in Reverse) records, which are among the

greatest LPs ever recorded, but even at the start in this '64-'66 Merseybeat r'n'b stage, this Manchester group were easily the best of their time this side of Kinks, Beatles and Stones. Surely of all the 60's greats, no one, no one was in their class vocally, not even Beatles, Byrds or Beach Boys, for no one had a more devastating trio like the Nash/**ALAN CLARKE/TONY HICKS** connection, able to take a simple pop song and make it an astounding moment. Just see "Look Through Any Window" (#4 UK 45, '65) here for proof. They didn't have 20 consecutive 60's top 20 UK hits for nothing! Even the longtime Hollies fan, who has the first 7 indispensable Hollies albums (the first 5 of which were reissued in England) will want this for the 9 non-LP cuts, of which only 4 are non-LP a-side hits (For a collection of all the a-side hits, we direct you to the '88 double LP All The Hits and More, since that one compiles all the 60's singles chronologically). In fact, if there's any complaint with this record, it's that 28 songs are on the 7 EPs, yet only 22 show up here. Fair enough, but of the 6 missing tracks, 3 of them are sadly non-LP b-sides no one can find anywhere these days, "Keep Off That Friend of Mine," "Honey and Wine," and "You'll Be Mine." What is really needed is a non-LP collection like that of The Kinks' 37 song Kinks Are Respectable Men from '88, and while I'm on a wish list, a 60's only part 2 of the excellent Hollies' Rarities LP from '88 (since Hollies sucked in the 70's and '80's). Of the 5 obscure b-sides included here, 1 is OK ("You Know He Did"), 3 are fantastic ("Baby That's All," "When I'm Not There" & "What Kind of Love"), and the other, the acrid "Come on Back" is incredible. Expert or mildly curious, this is a great buy of one of the greatest! (POB 328, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 2NE, UK)



#9 EFFIGIES 81-84 LP #10 STRANGLERS LP, 45s

THE EFFIGIES-REMAINS NONVIEWABLE (Roadkill): Though "what we all want" (to quote Gang of Four) is a release of recent Effigies material (we know they recorded their first four songs since '86's Ink last year), considering that the old '80-'84 stuff is out of print, this sampler of that period is well designed and needed. In particular, Roadkill is smart enough to include all 9 tracks from the first two 12" EPs Haunted Town and We're Da Machine, plus both sides of the classic, angry "Bodybag" b/w "Security" 45, so now you don't have to get all three records. The rest of the LP is 4 songs from the '84 1st LP that followed, Forever Grounded. Though how they could miss the sensational "Rather See None" from that LP beats me, the four fit in well with the earlier stuff. If you never heard any of this stuff before and you need some description, Effigies were (are) one of the heaviest sounding, most intense punk inspired rock bands in the country, with a varied rhythmic pulse and one of America's finest lyricists in leader (only

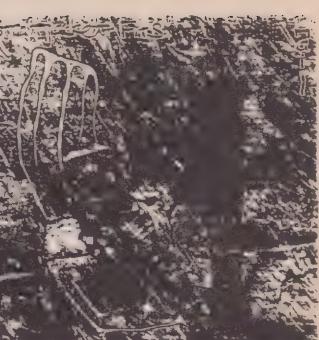
remaining original member) JOHN KEZDY. Blasting out of the original early 80's Chicago punk scene with Naked Raygun, Strike Under and others (see Busted at Oz live comp.), they skillfully combined post-punk and punk in the way that early Killing Joke, Gang of 4 and Ruts did, and the later albums not documented here even show unique, innovative post-punk maturity without the early punk fire (just the spirit and intensity/integrity). Here "Mob Clash," "Quota" (the most intense song about City Hall corruption you'll ever hear), and "Below The Drop" will literally knock you shoes and socks and maybe your pants off with a command and presence few have ever attained. The sardonic "Smile" will burn a hole through your fragile heart and Effigies won't apologize, it was good for you. You know when you come across an album that is so good you just can't express it in words, it's time to shut up. Buy. Now. Please. (P.O. Box 37, Prospect Hts., IL, 60070-0037)

STRANGLERS-TEN (CBS), "96 Tears," "Sweet Smell of Success" (CBS UK): They're a marvel! The same lineup for 15 years, which nobody, nobody else can say, now 10 albums (duhhh, dy yah think dat's why dey called it Ten? duhhh), Stranglers show no sign of winding down. This is the third of a series of the kinder, gentler Stranglers, and though the first of the trey is the best, '84's Aural Sculpture, this has several tasty treats, funny enough, most of them on side 2! "Too Many Teardrops" is one of those everlasting great Stranglers songs for your own greatest hits tape. When it comes to the bridge, with **JET BLACK**'s trademark snare drum rolls, it makes you so happy you could end up playing their other 9 albums! The last two cuts are also big faves, "Out of My Mind" has truly daft qualities, with the falsetto choruses, but mostly it's that pulsing sound in the verses (a specialty of producer **ROY THOMAS BAKER** from the first few Cars albums) setting up **HUGH CORNWALL**'s sea-saw melody that's so both cracked and chummy at the same time. Similarly, the closing "Never Look Back" features a keyboard roller-coaster tilt from **DAVE GREENFIELD**, you feel like you're on a boat during small craft warning conditions! Yes, side 2 is much better than side one, so start with that instead, but side one isn't bad either. "In This Place" is one of those great, swooning, epic sorrow ballads Stranglers have perfected on each of the albums (right up there with Dreamtime's "You Always Reap What You Sow," which is analogous). "Sweet Smell of Success" gets a good dance groove going for the chi-chi sound of vanity casualties. Sharp, blaring horn part too. And even their cover of ? **AND THE MYSTERIANS'** "96 Tears" (their 2nd straight 45 that was a cover, following **KINKS'** "All Day and All The Night") is alright, though with Greenfield's organ, it sounds almost like a duplicate of that 60's classic. Only "Let's Celebrate" (lyrics as bad as The Ohio Players) is a dud, the other 9 are fine. And even Baker's overly glossy production (the only minor gripe) can't restrain this group. Here's to another 15 years, still one of the best! **NOTE:** The b-side of "Sweet Smell," "Motorbike" is fun fare too, a cheezy song of motorbike riding with that heavy French accent of **JEAN JACQUES BURNELL**. Since Pete Defreitas died on a Motorbike, it's a touchy subject, but some people like to live on the edge, I guess.

THE UNDERTONES-THE PEEL SESSIONS LP (Strange Fruit UK): Alright! Whole LPs now, in the wake of the Jimi Hendrix BBC Sessions LP in '88. This one is three sessions, circa Undertones recorded 1/22/79, circa Hypnotized on 1/21/80, and circa The Sin of



#11 UNDERTONES PEEL SESSIONS LP 79-82



#12 STRAIGHT JACKET FITS LP (U.S.)

Pride on 11/8/82. The 1/22/79 session unfortunately already appeared as one of the 4 song 12" EPs for \$7 on import, which diehard fans already bought in '87, but now for a mere \$12 (on import, or \$13 CD) you can get the other two as well, 8 more songs. Or, if you missed that EP, now you get 12 songs for 12 bucks, and you must get these first two sessions somehow! Though Damien O'Neill seems to disagree, and though Undertones kept telling journalists that they weren't so hot and Buzzcocks were tons better, in fact, Undertones were one of the greatest pop groups of all time, and these first two sessions easily remind you of every reason you liked catchy hard pop-punk in the first place. Again, the 1st session is even more intense than that wondrous debut LP (their best), with an explosive lead off "Listening In" the most improved track in comparison to the LP versions. What a great wallop! "Family Entertainment" isn't as good (the floor tom isn't as heavy), but "Billy's Third" is perhaps even more desperate sounding (oh the throes of fear of rejection!) and "Here Comes the Summer" is more bouncy with a silly spoken introduction to bring smiles. Surprised Beach Boys never covered this harmless piece of fluff. The real archive discovery here, though, is 2nd LP Hypnotized stuff recorded like the 1st LP! The \$12 becomes an immediate non-issue as soon as you hear the opening strains of "Girls That Don't Talk" blasting like never before. The guitars are twice as loud and 3 times as meaty! This is the edge that was missed as Undertones progressed, great as they still were thereafter. **GARY GLITTER**'s "Rock and Roll" (remember them covering this at Hotel Diplomat in NY July '80?) is OK, and you can tell they ripped off "Hard Luck" from this. Even "Tearproof," a sorrowful encounter with the girl who won't open up, and "What's With Terry" ("it wasn't his glasses it was his horrible face!" cruel!) come flying out with far less restraint. The four '82 cuts are surprisingly nice, friendly light pop tunes with mild Motown overtones (undertones?) that makes you realize that the banal production was largely responsible for how bad that last LP was (embarrassing is kind), though "The Love Parade" is still soul-less wank even in this better setting. An irresistible album at any case, Undertones never go out of style. Pity no 3rd LP (Positive Touch) Sessions though!

STRAITJACKET FITS-HAIL (Rough Trade): Great news! Hail is now available at domestic prices instead of New Zealand import \$14 range! The bad news is that this Hail barely resembles the original import namesake, and not just 'cause it has a new sleeve. Side 2 of both records is identical, but only the title track (the NZ single) remains from side one,

the other four tracks being deleted and replaced by cuts from the NZ EP "Life in One Chord." Much as those cuts are also good, why do American record companies, even hip indies, tamper so with finished LPs? It's not so bad when they add a song or two from a recent single, but when they make substitutions it's infuriating; anyone who likes this wonderful LP will now still have to spend the \$14 to get the four chopped off songs, because all four are excellent, especially "Take From the Years" and "Telling Tales" (the other two are "Dead Heat" and "Only You Knew"). But for now, let's just be happy this altered version is here, certainly the changes will not dull the impact for newcomers. "Hail" and "Life in One Chord" are the twin firestorms, the former a "hail" of fuzzy, distorted Mission of Burma like power-rhythmed guitar buzz, the latter a fierce guitar layered mother load motorcycle ride without a helmet (this stuff ain't safe). "Dialing a Prayer" (from the EP), a cover of LEONARD COHEN's "So Long Marianne" ('68), "Fabulous Things," "This Taste Delight" and "Grate" show their softer, more 60s-esque pop abilities (you should hear "Grate"'s ghostly farfisa!) without losing their contemporary edge. Of all the bands that have graced the Flying Nun label, the Fits are the most versatile; whereas Bats for example are chained to one style and sound, the Fits show muscle here, dexterity there, and quiet longings everywhere, the first of the lot to alternate the subtle and the kick-butt. The songs have hooks galore, and the vocals by guitarists SHAYNE CARTER and ANDREW BROUH are nice/pretty yet masculine and full. Along with Chills, a very different animal, NZ's finest! Get this, you'll like it so much you'll be buying the now necessary import! (611 Broadway, NY, NY 10012)



#13 ESQUERITA '59 LP



#14 CHILLS LP

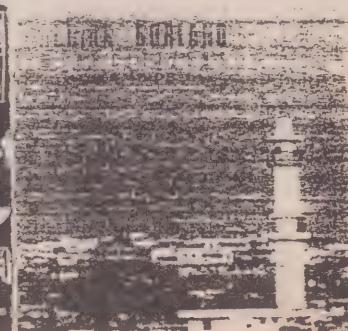
ESQUERITA-ESQUERITA (Stateside/EMI UK). At last, at last! After the startling '87 issue of his hottest ever recordings, the '58 Sellers Studio rough demo acetates recorded after fan GENE VINCENT brought him to Dallas, and found much later in the vaults (an LP called Vintage Voola on N.Y.'s Norton Records) followed the non-LP outtakes his old 50's label Capitol compiled onto the Rockin' The Joint LP, here finally is the long wished for reissue of that very '59 Capitol album, his only LP from back then. Yes, the wilder, scorchin' r'n'b Esquerita is more abundant on those other two records (no doubt Capitol went for the "nicer" or more polished side of the 28 tracks he recorded for them in choosing this LP, '59 was the year the insipid crooners were taking over instead of the rock 'n' rollers), even this stuff has a flame underneath it, and shows Mr. Voola could play piano-pumping blues (he was a friend and mutual admirer of **BIG JOE TURNER**) too. And there are generous helpings of rockin' r'n'b like "Crazy, Crazy, Feeling,"

73 "Believe Me When I Say Rock 'n' Roll Is Here To Stay" or a classy version of **BUDDY HOLLY**'s "Maybe Baby." There's even some light, peppy pop like "Get Back Baby." With his hard playing band, the backing tracks are vintage finger-snapping old stuff that we never tire of, but more to the point, that sandpaper rough yet appealing out-of-this-world vocal sound of the crazy man himself rules this record as ever. Much has been made of the similarity between Esquerita and his friend and competitor **LITTLE RICHARD**, and certainly Esquerita is the only other human who could whoop with Penniman, but this lesser known really was even more over the edge as a vocalist, an incredible mixture of controlled (gruff) and violent (screeches) singing in each song few 'cept Jerry Lee Lewis ever mastered! And Richard often cited Esquerita as a huge influence on his piano playing, so you know you're getting that bashing keys mania euphoria! Get the Vintage Voola if you want the adrenalin; get these other 2 if you want a stylist master r'n'b legend with the swing of true greatness. This stuff is addictive!

THE CHILLS-SUBMARINE BELLS (Slash/WEA): There's a soft spot in the heart for The Chills, makers of perhaps the most warming music since the band Chills' leader **MARTY PHILLIPS** admires the most, the late 60's Beach Boys. 2 or 3 of these songs would fit in well on any of the last 6 Beach Boys LPs of the 60's, though obviously the Wilsons, Jardine and Love are better singers than anyone else at this stuff. The title track, with its stillness and lush yet silent landscape might be a homage to Pet Sounds, while the autobiographical, cheerful, yet questioning "Heavenly Pop Hit" is more 20/20 or Wild Honey fare. It's a good question; after 10 years and 11 lineups, the Chills finally hit the big bad major label. Is the spoon-fed hard rock, spectacle loving American public ready for the Chills' modest, heavenly pop hits? The funny thing is that like their live show, Chills can break up their gorgeous mosaics with charging, drum smacking zippers like "Oncoming Day" and "Familiarity Breeds Contempt," or craft the near-perfect melody-strewn song as they always have like "Tied Up in a Chain," "Part Past, Part Fiction," or the sublime "Effloresce and Deliquesce." Or pack up the band for a gilded piano, acoustic, voice number like "Don't Be Memory" with Phillips "listening to THE BYRDS singing on the tape recorder." Unlike their 1st album and even the Kaleidoscope World collection, this time the production (**GARY SMITH**) is commiserate with The Chills' tropical charm and grace, and the 12 songs flow like a New Zealand peaceful brook. Special mention goes to **ANDREW TODD** who (take note Inspiral Carpets!) always has the right keyboard sound for each ambiance through a maze of varying material, a man with a golden ear. Wonderful LP.

#15 SAINTS LIVE 77-81

#16 ADRIAN BORLAND LP



THE SAINTS-SCARCE SAINTS (HYMNS OF OBLIVION 1977-1981; 15 TRACKS NOT ON AUSTRALIAN ALBUMS) (Raven AUS): First let's talk about why the longtime Saints fan/record buyer will have to have this. Side 2 is a half hour of live Saints that easily renders the otherwise fair Live in a Mudhut forgettable. We're talking six songs recorded at London's Dingwalls in '81 (presumably with the Monkey Puzzle lineup, it sure sounds like it), and a blistering six minute "Nights in Venice," (with bits of "Batman" thrown in) as raw in sound quality as in performance, an original lineup explosion from one of their gigs with Radio Birdman in Sydney's Paddington Town Hall in 1977. **ED KUEPPER**'s guitar's as gritty and hissing as a Norelco shaver cutting a 6 month old beard! God what an awesome killer! Makes you wish you could hijack Mr. Peabody from the Bulwinkle show to take you back in time to be there, you'd have probably fainted on the spot from the sheer electricity! The 6 Dingwalls tracks are also hot, though in a rock and roll fire way, more than the old Saints punk overload. Despite the change, old lineup material like "No Time," their cover of **ELVIS PRESLEY**'s "Kissing Cousins," and the classic of classics, "Know Your Product" all sound pulled out of the fire like Chicken Tandoori, as does their rockin' "Gypsy Woman" (an **ALLUSIONS**' cover they did on the B-side of "Let's Pretend") into **RAY CHARLES**' "Hit The Road Jack." "Simple Love" and "On the Waterfront" aren't as hard-nosed, but also cut it. **CHRIS BAILEY**, one of the finest singers of all time, is at his full-throated best, and these recordings even surpass the Monkey Puzzle document of this comeback lineup. OK, that's your \$15 Australian import worth, no Saints admirer should miss this! No way! Now let's talk about why the mildly interested should also buy this. Side one is 4 rare original lineup tracks you won't find on those amazing first 3 LPs. The silly, yet immensely exciting (like Dickies later) covers of "River Deep Mountain High" (**IKE AND TINA TURNER**) and "Lipstick on Your Collar" (**PATTI PAGE**) are from the "1-2-3-4" EP, a 4 song 7" (or double 7") that was **ALGY WARD**'s debut on bass with Saints. "Lies" and the original version of "Do the Robot" (later "International Robots") are from the limited edition '78 12" of their only UK top 40 hit, "This Perfect Day." If this stuff doesn't convince you to buy those old LPs, recently reissued in France, nothing will! You also get the studio version of that little known b-side, "Gypsy Woman," and 3 tracks from the comeback '79 EP Paralytic Tonight Dublin Tomorrow. An amazing record for all concerned! (POB 92, Camberwell, 3124 AUS)

ADRIAN BORLAND AND THE CITIZENS-ALEXANDRIA, "Light the Sky," "Beneath the Big Wheel" (Play it Again Sam BELGIUM): Adrian Borland is a survivor. His career now spans 13 years and 10 studio albums (including his first 2 LPs with '77-'78 punk band **THE OUTSIDERS** and one with '78-'79 postpunk band **SECOND LAYER**). Here Borland takes stock after the breakup of the much missed **THE SOUND**, whose 6 LPs stand as some of the great works of our time, and gets more reflective. The Sound already were good at mastering a variety of moods to their alternatively austere, sensuous and lighthearted pop; without his longtime band, the same is true only more so. Most of the LP is far lighter, hopeful, watching, acoustic based and romantically dusky. Swimming strings and even inconspicuous horns inform the overall warmth of this record, as if Borland has mellowed out but still holds his touch for graceful and breezy music. In fact, much of it shows a minor Velvet Underground influence.

Recorded once again at Elephant Studios with **NICK ROBBINS** (as was Jeopardy, All Fall Down, and Thunder Up), the LP starts brisk with the single "Light the Sky," a hard pop song with a catchy pleading chorus, moving right into the album's true masterpiece, the deeply moving "Rogue Beauty," which has the deepest sounding strings we've heard since, well, the last Sound album! "Beneath The Big Wheel" balances a somber detachment with a soulful shuffle. Also notable is the LP's closer, "Deep Deep Blue," which rises from the depths of near-silent resigned despondency to a stirring (with bolts of Borland's familiar electric guitar) "maybe tomorrow" change of heart. Backing vocals on this chorus are provided by none other than our dear friend **SUMISHITA BRAHM** whose voice drops like rain on a heated brow. Gorgeous! Alexandria is a wonderful album; perhaps it is not up there with the best Sound LPs, but as with any solo LP, Borland deserves to be judged anew, solely on the merits of his new career, and he's still making vital, intelligent, sincerely crafted and poignant music. One of the best is back. **NOTE:** "Beneath the Big Wheel" does not feature a non-LP b-side, but "Light the Sky" does: "Found Lost Found" has an appealing demo feel and a pleasant "I just wanna feel that way again" chorus. Very nice. (67 Rue de Cureghem 1000 Brussels Belgium)

ALMOST FORGOT: Keyboards are provided by an impressive tandem of The Sound's **COLVIN MAYER**, and ex **MEMBERS**' guy **CHRIS PAYNE**, fresh off his recent cameo with the **NEUROTICS** on their last LP.



#17 SLF PEEL LP, LIVE



#18 SERVANTS 45

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS-THE PEEL SESSIONS LP (Strange Fruit UK): Again, one of these three sessions was previously issued as a 4 song EP, the first one from 9/12/78. But, as much as the 1st LP material is the best of their punk stuff, it's the other two, previously unheard sessions that are momentous here. Nobody's Hero was a fine LP with great punk energy, but compared to the torrid debut Inflammable Material, it was almost polished! These 7 earlier recordings of that material (and the "Straw Dogs" single as well) from the sessions on 9/3/79 and 2/12/80 show it was the production of **DOUG BENNETT** at fault; here's your chance to hear stuff like "At The Edge" and "Wait and See" as it would have sounded had it appeared on that electrifying 1st LP! In particular, "Nobody's Hero," is so impressive it blows away the LP version, with a very different set of original lyrics. "Fly the Flag" is so embittered and enraged it's the equal of "No More of That," if you can believe that! Even the cover of **THE SPECIALS** "Doesn't Make it Alright" sounds more pissed off. \$12? Cash OK? Who needs money anyway? **NOTE:** Although **DAVE CAVANAGH** of Sounds did a credible job with his altogether brief liner notes, he should have his head (or at least his ears) inspected for using the words "tinny" and "positively docile" anywhere near the Inflammable Material

version of "Suspect Device," much less in the same sentence describing that recording! Please donate a box of Q-Tips to Mr. Cavanagh through our address, that LP version is still the most powerful punk recording in history, guaranteed to make even Mona Lisa gawk! Just the opening chords could set off the smoke alarm, just about!

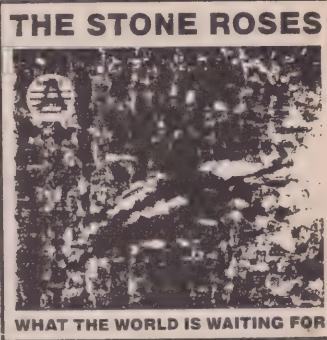
STIFF LITTLE FINGERS "The Last Time" Live 12" (Link UK): Link UK adds three songs left off their SLF Live and Loud, recorded in London in '87 and released in '88. The live LP was OK, and interesting to hear before we actually saw them, but it has been rendered unnecessary by the release of SLF's own '88 live document See You Up There on Virgin (Caroline in US), released in '89 predominantly to stop sales of Live and Loud (source: interviews in last issue of this mag, and Suburban Voice), a much better representative of reunited late '80's SLF. So Link, undaunted, releases this 12" with three songs left off both LPs! Interesting that both reunited DAMNED and SLF tried to be funny by covering ROLLING STONES' "The Last Time" single to end their sets. But neither can fool us. While JAKE BURNS reminds the audience that this "could be their last time," we know, as we did at Thunders/Heartbreakers shows that we'd probably see them again! Sure enough, SLF continue to gig, including their recent London 3/17/90 St. Pats show. Fine with me, though this version, like the Damned's is alright but nothing special, with none of the sus, soul or style of the original. "Mr. Fire Coal Man," from the back of "Back to Front," was never their best reggae cover. No, the real reason to get this, if you really are fanatical enough about SLF to blow \$7 (plus tax) for one great song, is for the pretty sharp version of "Two Guitars Clash" which we didn't see them do here in New York last July. Never mind HENRY CLUNEY sings slightly off-key in places, his vocal is more convincing than on "The Last Time" and the song does what the other two don't: kick! Tape this off someone who can afford to buy it, SLF fans!.

THE SERVENTS "It's My Turn" 12" (Glass UK): The Servents are back, but before we start rejoicing that we got back a rising band that quit in '85 after but one single and a truly superb 4 song EP, be it known that the only remaining member from that prodigal group is singer/guitarist DAVID WESTLAKE. So in a sense, this is just Westlake's 2nd solo record after his also great 6 song "The Word Around Town" EP on Creation UK two years ago, he just dredged up his old band's name for this release. No harm done, few knew the old band, and he was the main member anyway! (is it true one of the old Servents is in Loop now?) For his new Servents, Westlake employs an ex-HOUSEMARTIN on drums HUGH WHITTAKER, and reaches all the way to Boston to grab a friend of mine, SUSAN TANNER to play an inspired violin (and yes Sue, I would have said if you were bad, which you're obviously not. Between this and Sumishta's backing vocals on Adrian Borland's LP, it's been strange, people I know working with artists I've been a fan of for years. How pleasureable!). "It's my Turn" is a hopping popper with a Smiths' like bounce (Westlake is even starting to croon a little like Morrissey, which is a rare compliment 'round this mag), and the equally sprightly "Afterglow" (think all you used to like about 1st LP Orange Juice!) is also a gem. "Faithful To Three Lovers" is a little hokey, but pardonable for its amused enthusiasm. What breaks Servents over the hump, dating back to '85's "The Sun a Small Star" and the corking "Meredith,"

is Westlake's ear for a tune, a witty lyric, a memorable guitar line. Quietly he's been one of the best songwriters in England for half a decade and few have noticed. This is the real McCoy in a pool of the OKs, alrights, pretty-goods, fairs, not-bads and sometimes mediocres of the UK indie precious pop scene, and he should be up there with House of Love and co. challenging for the crown. A splendid single, we can only hope for more! (PO Box 875, London NW6 2QQ, UK)



#19 SOCIAL D. LP



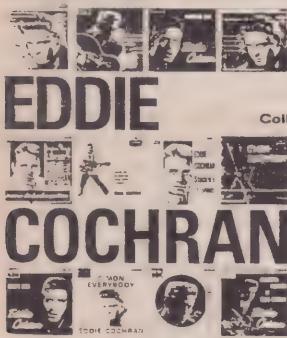
#10 STONE ROSES 45

SOCIAL DISTORTION-SOCIAL DISTORTION (Epic/CBS): Leading off with the fireball "So Far Away" (not The Chords' song), which starts this off with a bang much like "I Just Want to Give You the Creeps" did on their first '83 LP Mommy's Little Monster, Social D. is out to show that signing to Epic does not mean the end of their heavy punk sound. In fact, this is the dirtiest of their three albums, a go-for-the-throat piledriving, glorious kick-ass double guitar riffing paradise for rock 'n' roll salivators. Sure, the country strains of '88's Prison Bound are still hanging around on half the tracks, and they even finally got around to recording their long-standing cover of JOHNNY CASH's "Ring of Fire," but even these are so buried in the guitars of MIKE NESS and DENNIS DANIEL that they sound more like a stylistic breath of air rather than a departure. And when they just rock out without the more rootsy background, on "So Far Away, the steel-thick "Let it Be Me" (the pre-LP single, hot choice) and the leering, tongue-hanging out, unanswerable lust of "She's a Knockout," few make traditional Stonesey r'n'r better. Rhythm section of bassist JOHN MAURER and drummer (ex-LEWD) CHRIS REECE are really kicking now, and the production is super. Ness continues to improve as the vocalist too! His voice is still low and dusky (the kind the girls love) but his range is expanding and he uses nicer tones to his advantage. From the words he's still recovering from the shock of realization after quitting smack, but he's coming out of the warning-others stage ('cept "Drug Train") and into more bemused contemplation of societal foibles in general, drug abuse included. "Story of My Life," "A Place in My Heart" and "It Could've Been Me" are all succinct expressions of regret and passing youth/romance. Sure, he always walks the tightrope of cliche, but like the 50's stuff he listens to, he understands how to make that seem universal and sincere (even innocent) like those folks did. Rockabilly, r'n'b and r'n'r in a punk modern sound, this is a whale of a major label debut. Let's hope now they're signed they'll make more than the 3 LPs they've managed in over a decade!

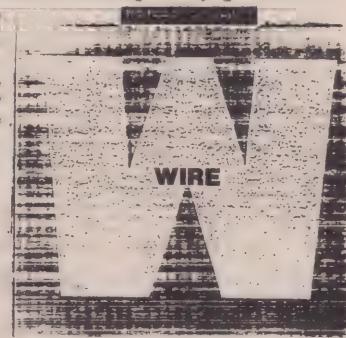
SOCIAL DISTORTION "Let it Be Me" (Epic/CBS): Worth it for the two b-side covers. "It's All Over Now" is their 3rd ROLLING STONES cover (The Stones' 4th single and first ever U.K. #1, released 7/64), though

unlike "Under My Thumb" and "Backstreet Girl," this time they've done a song The Stones were themselves covering. This no frills, basic version is jolly enough with the Brian Jonesish harmonica (like on "Drug Train") all over the place. Much better is a low fuzz, hushed "Pretty Thing" by the great **WILLIE DIXON** (who the Stones also covered regularly!). **MIKE NESS** is at his sexiest being mesmerized by womanhood, much more than the girl-watching of "She's a Knockout," say. Really strong version!

STONE ROSES—"What The World is Waiting For" (Silvertone UK): Of course, it's the b-side "Fools Gold" that's everyone plays and talks about. Making a statement of the obvious, when Silvertone/RCA released this here, they switched sides, with "Fools" being the a-side. The short version of "Fools" is 4:15, a swanking, groove-y, snare heavy (**RENI** may have used a tape loop), bass plucking (think Derek Forbes in Simple Minds '81-'83), slow, lazy funk number with Hendrix-like wah-wah guitar from **JOHN SQUIRE** while **IAN BROWN** sings another one of his nicer melodies. Making a pop song out of funk is a great trick that's paid big dividends for a band already mega in UK, right about the time the press there was ready to revile them for the crime of being suddenly famous. Good thing for "Fools Gold," 'cause the real a-side is really nothing special, more typical Roses, a song that's OK enough but is beaten by every single track on the LP, and a good many of their b-sides as well ("Mersey Paradise" in particular)! This would have sounded like treading water, but the daring (well at least adventurous) b-side is attractive enough to ward away that criticism. The long version of "Fools" is 9:53 (12" and CD only) and goes on so long you forget it's playing. Good background music in that regard though that's hardly intended! It's never boring, and sometimes hypnotic. We await the new single "One Love" and LP, much anticipated, yes.



#21 EDDIE COCHRAN EPs



#22 WIRE PEEL, LIVE

EDDIE COCHRAN-THE EP COLLECTION (See For Miles UK): Another wonderful batch of EP tracks from See For Miles. Too bad it's not a double LP though; Of the 32 tracks on Cochran's EPs, only 20 show up here. Yet this is a tasteful survey of a Los Angeles legend people know by only 4 songs! Of those 4 hits, "Something Else" isn't here, but the other 3 are, "Summertime Blues," "C'mon Everybody" and "20 Flight Rock" (which is a considerably different version than the one that leads off side 2 of the UK edition of Eddie's only true LP, '57's Singing to My Baby). It also includes the songs few have heard on oldies radio, but which no true old rock 'n' roll fan should be without, "Jeannie Jeannie Jeannie," which packs a guitar wallop, the lively "Pretty Girl," and the real favorite, the revered "Nervous Breakdown" (no, not the first Black Flag 45!), with that everlasting simple riff that was

appropriated 2 years later for the more famous "Shakin' All Over" by Johnny Kidd and The Pirates. You also get down with a heavy blues version (more like **JOHN ESTES'** original) of "Milk Cow Blues," way better than Elvis Presley's OK rockabilly treatment, and almost as wild as The Kinks later one. These head and feet shakers are mixed in with Eddie's teen idol music, low profile Presley-like ballads and pop songs with tacky period backing vocals. 3 are from that '57 LP (which is almost all this sugar-coated stuff), his first hit "Sitting in the Balcony," "Mean When I'm Mad," and "Stockin's 'n' Shoes," as well as the equally sweetened "Teresa," "Rock 'n' Roll Blues," and "3 Steps to Heaven." But Cochran still has the voice to cut it cool even on these cornier numbers. So this is a very entertaining collection, half rockers, half innocent pleasers; it's a luxury of an "EP collection" that the blockbuster hits can safely mingle with equally valid oscuros. The sad thing is that 6 of these 8 EPs were released in England after Cochran's UK car accident death in April 1960, the same crash which nearly killed Gene Vincent, who he was touring with. So he left behind only 3 years worth of recording. But along with Presley, Vincent, and **CARL PERKINS** (whose "Blue Suede Shoes" gets a workout here), he was the greatest rockabilly cat ever! (POB 328, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 2NE, UK)

WIRE-THE PEEL SESSIONS LP (Strange Fruit UK): Again, like the other Peel Sessions LPs put out in the last 6 months, 1/3 of this LP was previously issued in 12" EP form some four years ago, but since few of you probably parted with the required \$7 for those, this is a much better use of funds at a whole LP for \$11. Besides, even if you did buy that (we're suckers, aren't we?), you get two new sessions to chew on like the famished late 70's Wire fan you are! The previously issued 1/18/78 session leads off, with the two "new" ones, 9/20/78 and 9/11/79 following. While that first session is still the must for the majority who believe that '78's Pink Flag or '78's Chairs Missing is the ultimate Wire LP (and the genius LP of our generations), with it's freezing "I am the Fly" truly frosty (shiver) "Practice Makes Perfect," and the previously unknown Jeckyl-and-Hyde "Culture Vultures," even us 154-aholics are amazed at the first 2 LP-like treatments of what later appeared on that astounding LP in '79. Hearing "The Other Window" as a frenzied pogo-machine in the manner of "Sand in my Joints" or "12XU" instead of the gripping vacuum dirge we're familiar with is our uncovering of scrolls in a cave! In fact, it's difficult to suppress the urge to laugh, this version is so primitive in contrast. "Mutual Friend," "On Returning" and "Indirect Inquiries" are also recorded closer to the first 2 LPs than 154's still mesmerizing clash of soundscapes, if the difference isn't as stark. Yep, a treasure, a cash-in, a archival breakthrough from one of the most respected pioneers of post-punk before there was any, courtesy of the ubiquitous and amazing Mr. Peel. What would we do without him, then and now? **NOTE:** If I haven't said a word about the 15 minute, endless "Crazy About Love" which ends this LP (and was once issued as a '83 12" by Rough Trade UK), you may indeed infer that was intentional. Ah well, the misteps of Giants? **NOTE 2:** Remember, those first 3 LPs were reissued by Restless Retro!

WIRE-IT'S BEGINNING TO AND BACK AGAIN (Mute/Enigma): Had this one for a year, but the tape busted and it's just been patched up now. Since it's now a bit old, I'll keep this short (miracles never

cease!). This is Wire's idea of a modern live album, to take live recordings of gigs in Chicago and Portugal and put so many studio overdubs and new parts on them it's like a new studio LP of familiar material reworked. It gives us the two fine dance singles "Eardrum Buzz" (a non-single version appears with a more frantic dance beat) and "In Vivo," and a couple of possibly better versions of Bell is a Cup and Ideal Copy material. Like 1980's Document and Eyewitness double live before it, perhaps this is only essential for the already (totally) Wired and dance club boogiers (who needs Jane Fonda when you can try shakin' your carcass furiously to "It's a Boy!"), but it's fun and consistent, and boasts some of their bleakest landscapes since 154 (see "Public Place" and "Over Theirs," both more far-out than previously). Wire are already recording a new LP according to Lime Lizard mag in England, this is just a snack to tide us over until late supper. (PO Box 3628, Culver City, CA 90231-3628)



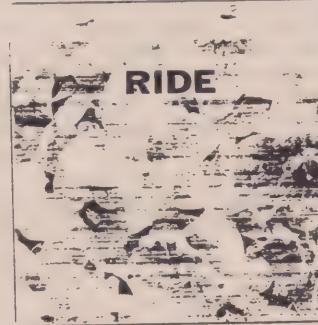
#23 MOCK TURTLES 45

#24 T.V. SMITH(CHEAP)45

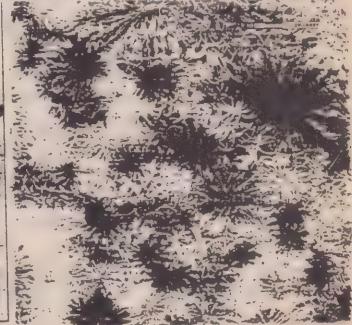
THE MOCK TURTLES—"And Then She Smiles" 12" (Imaginary UK): Manchester's Turtles, the pride of the Imaginary label, has strangely enough beat strong competition for best song on all four Imaginary Tribute albums, doing SYD BARRETT's "No Good Trying," CAPTAIN BEEFHEART's "Big Eyed Beans From Venus," THE KINKS' "Big Sky" and THE BYRDS' "Time Between/Why." This is their third EP/12" of their own, and last time around the best thing was also a cover from the Wicker Man movie. All of their originals have been good as well, but finally here they come up with something to match the brilliance of their covers. Dropping their mild hints at late 60's psychedelia, they instead mine mid-60's pop with deep shimmering guitars (MARTIN COOGAN and MARTIN MURRAY) and a light but supple melody sung by Coogan. This would be a hit for sure if it were released on a major by a better known artist, it's too delectable to miss! Switching muses on side two, "Calm Before The Storm" is just bass (ANDREW STEWARDSON) and a lithe viola (also Stewardson) supporting the plaintive voice of Coogan. Very nice! Then comes another sensational cover! Their recording of "Shangri-La," also by the late 60's Kinks ("Big Sky" is Kinks are The Village Green Preservation Society, 1968; "Shangri-La" is Aurthur or the Rise and Fall of the British Empire, 1969. These are the two best Kinks LPs ever, and two of the 30 or so best albums ever recorded!). Although Mock Turtles' version of "Shangri-La" appeared on the CD version of the aforementioned Kinks' tribute LP Shangri-La, vinyl-only types can now also experience this dazzling rendition, complete with the same full-bodied horns that enlivened the original, and with intensity intact. RAY DAVIES would be pleased to see his contempt for dead end Middle Class values so well preserved, though neither he nor any Kinks' purist will be happy that Mock

Turtles omit the "La-la-la-la-la" part after the bridge, shame on 'em! A minor foible, however, amidst such a stupendous modern version. Hard to believe no one's signed this band over there! (28 Hopwood Ave., Hopwood, Heywood, Lancs, OL10 2AX, UK)

T.V. SMITH'S CHEAP—"Third Term" (Deltic UK): Been waiting for this one for a while! Ex-**ADVERTS** leader Smith puts out his first single in 4 years since the **PRODUCTION HOUSE** 45 he collaborated on with ex-Advert (and **MIKE OLDFIELD**) keyboard player **TIM CROSS**. Cross shows up again here as producer, and does a marvelous job capturing Smith's first vinyl offering with his band of three years. "Third Term" has all the bite of Cheap's gig at Harlow, England's Square club last May, a sound that will surprise many familiar with Smith's career. In fact, "Third Term" comes off more as a followup to Adverts' '78 classic "Television's Over," as if the **T.V. SMITH'S EXPLORERS** LP and rare solo LP were mere departures from the norm. Not that this is nostalgic, it sounds perfectly contemporary, just that Smith has gone back to simple loud guitar rock and it sounds damned fresh! **ATTILLA THE STOCKBROKER** thinks Smith is one of the best songwriters in the world, and many agree for obvious reasons (check the prices on the Adverts' "Gary Gilmore's Eyes" 45 someday!). Both sides are undeniably hit material, with Smith's equal prowess with a pen; "Third Term" expresses a clever annoyance with **MARGARET THATCHER**'s lock on the Prime Minister job, a common subject in UK pop, but one rarely done this sensibly and ironically. "Third term/we never learn/we always were gluttons for punishment." Sound familiar Americans? The flip, "Buried By the Machine" will knock anyone who's worked for a big company for a loop. Smith phrases "deadend" dejection better than anyone with the word "buried." You know it! To keep the price "cheap," Smith has insisted that no picture sleeve be issued, a gesture for a skint nation on the dole, like T.V. himself. Great comeback, on **CAPTAIN SENSIBLE**'s Deltic label; good thing some people have good memories! Another reason to love the Cap'n! (14a Notting Hill Gate, London, W11 3JE UK)



#25 RIDE 2nd EP



#26 RED LARRY LP

RIDE—"Like a Daydream" EP (Creation UK): 2nd EP from Oxford's Ride is even better than their first! This is pop subversion at its best, in that the guitar/bass/drums sound is thick, discordant, harsh, helter-skelter and otherwise lumpy, everything on the edge of distortion; pushing in the red, not the backing sounds you associate with classic pop. Yet it's not unpleasant sounding, and becomes downright powerful when the agile melodies, drifting harmonies and straightforward riffs all kick in together. "Like a Daydream" deserves a 7" it's such a proper breeding of such incongruous elements! "Silver" is slow and cruel, reveling in it's nasty lunge, yet hiding a psychedelic almost Hendrix-like soul underneath. "Furthest Sense" has the best

verse melody yet, a big post-60's acid feel to the double-track harmony, this and "Perfect Time" have hints of a That Petrol Emotion like pop groove. Bashing, hot stuff! Guitars like weapons, but voices of angels! **NOTE:** Since The Smiths, and more recently Stone Roses, having a running sleeve art theme is becoming a popular idea. One cannot tell any difference between the cover of this and last year's EP except for the color of the sleeve. This one's yellow. (8 Westgate St., London E8 3RN UK)

RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY-BLOW (Beggars Banquet/RCA): The first time I heard this I hated it, what a pile of junk! Sometimes your own stupidity can amaze you. Two weeks later another try, and did someone slip a different LP into the sleeve (dirty trick!) or does senility come to you in your 20's? Not only is this a radical departure in material within their time tested sound, but it's a bold stroke at that, all the drama and frightening air of 84's Talk About The Weather mixed with a more sympathetic, almost fragile contemplation! Tempos are slow but never dragging or goth-like, guitars (old reliable WOOLFIE and singer CHRIS REED) reverberate in the background like a haunting, distant siren on a sleepless night, and Reed's almost bleary delivery takes on a warmth he's never possessed previously. Imagine Pornography Cure if Robert Smith were somber and reflective instead of angry and tortured. No, not even that's a good enough picture of "Happy To See Me," the previously reviewed excellent single "Temptation," and the almost glimmering (is this the band that once gave us "Gyp?" and "Chance?") "Too Many Colors." This has all the mood of a post-hangover morning, of a new fresh afternoon after a long day's journey into night. The Lorries have always set a mood, but the black in their old sound (and sleeves!), is gone (!!) without losing their grip on the listener. You think that's easy? The melodic strides set last time 'round on Nothing Wrong are still here, but this time they dare lighten the approach. "Heaven" is even breezy and quiet soul-searching and "You are Everything" is moving appreciation of companionship from the former ice-kings. The splashes of color in the plants of the sleeve filter into this remarkable album; There's so much going on behind these simple, sympathetic, sincere songs (don't miss "Gift That Shines," another standout), particularly the fascinating guitar bits, there's more depth to this than anything they've recorded, and that's saying plenty! They've turned the corner, but it requires an effort to turn it with them, a requirement to drop all previous good or bad expectations borne of reputation or back catalog. Few bands can do such a complete makeover while preserving what's good about them. This is nothing short of unexpected triumph from an otherwise old favorite. (274 Madison Ave, Suite 804, NYC 10016)

#27 THE PRUDES 45s



#28 GENE VINCENT EPs



78 THE PRUDES "P.S. I'm Leaving," "Never Penetrate" (Imaginary UK): Imaginary signs the terrific Prudes, and their 1st single is a new version of "P.S." slightly better than the one on their only previous 45 on Yo Yo Records. The b-sides are even better, especially the downcast "Something Tells Me," which creates a monster mood of melancholy with a mild blues riff underneath (like Smiths "How Soon is Now"), and a snake hihat roll lifted from Bunnymen's "Bring on the Dancing Horses." Never mind the references, here's a great song anyway! "New Thrill" is even more snappy, with a simple yet chirpy riff and a supple melody. Singer **BRADLEIGH SMITH** shows a nice detached yet moving despondency again as if "love" is more unhappy than anything "thrilling." Good guitar number. Lastly, the "dub mix" of the a-side is even kind of fun, rather than typically redundant. The new single's even better! Produced by **PAT COLLIER**, who does a superior job than he did with Wonder Stuff and Primitives, "Never Penetrate" features an insistent beat, a layered "I've seen it all" chorus, and a caressing lead guitar line. As the song progresses it builds until it's past the speed limit, everything mounts until one is slightly swept away. Strong single! The 2 b-sides also recall the Smiths, interestingly enough, only with Smith instead of Morrissey. "Factotum" is a clever, free, calm waltz with a twist: "To succeed, all you need is courage, talent, luck, and a rich Dad." Sardonic aren't they?! A wry comment that succeeds because of the crumb of truth in it. "If You Think You're Free (No Escape is Possible)," has no words, and is more out of the Smiths instrumentals like "Money Changes Everything," with a surreptitiously needling guitar tantalizing over a simple, repetitious beat. Again, don't read into the Smiths comparisons too much; unlike many copycats we encounter, Prudes have their own sound and feel, they just tread some of the same ground, there's plenty of room for further exploration. These records show what was so great about Prudes at their opening slots for Stone Roses (Dingwalls) and Godfathers (Town and Country) in London last May. Imaginary gets another really good one. How 'bout an LP? (28 Hopwood Ave., Hopwood, Heywood, Lancs, OL10 2AX, UK)

GENE VINCENT-THE EP COLLECTION (See For Miles UK): Like most in the 50's, Vincent could do it all. Originally a country artist, he made his name as a rockabilly star with a sharp backing band **THE BLUE CAPS**, blessed with a huge hit with his very first single in 1956 "Be Bop a Lulu." Vincent soon branched out to blues ("Baby Blue"), r'n'b, and rock 'n' roll; plus few could sing a more touching ballad ("The Wayward Wind," "Keep it a Secret," the great "Peace of Mind," and **GERSHWIN**'s "Summertime" as good as REM's). Though his voice was never as celebrated as Orbison, Jerry Lee's, or Little Richard's, it's on these quieter moments that Vincent proves his generous talent without resorting to the teeny-bop glop his good pal Eddie Cochran often did (though Cochran, unbeknownst to his label Liberty, was anonymously singing backing vocals on these Capitol sessions!). A good half of this can be found on 2 of Vincent's original LPs, with 7 from his 4th LP A Gene Vincent Record Date and 4 from The Crazy Beat of Gene Vincent. But all those LPs are hard to find, and in general these 22 tracks are equally non-famous, many of which are vintage period burners like "Hold Me Hug Me Rock Me" (from '58's Gene Vincent and The Blue Caps). To hear Vincent belt out a trumped up, piano-pumping r'n'b thumper like "Rocky Road Blues" fills

one with all the beat-crazy original excitement; it's not hard to see why he was such fast friends with Esquerita! "She She Little Sheila," and "Dance to The Bop" are here, and from his first ever Capitol sessions in '56, the raw "Race With The Devil" and "Crazy Legs" are non-stop action. Like all these EP collection LPs, this is neither a greatest hits nor even a "best of," missing "Be Bop a Lula," and a lot of his rockabilly classics like "Red Blue Jeans and a Pony Tail." This is much more of a fair random overview, and it's a pleasure. Note: What a great series this is for us younger folks who weren't born yet! In addition to the 3 reviewed in this mag, one can get equally appreciative paws on like collections by THE ANIMALS and the 60's MANFRED MAN, or if you're in a giddy mood, GERRY AND THE PACEMAKERS. And it's great to see all the original UK sleeves too! Note 2: Vincent was always more popular in England, so once again, it's no surprise this is an import of a classic US artist!



#29 IAN MCCULLOCH 45



#30 RED LETTER DAY 45

IAN MCCULLOCH—"Faith and Healing" (WEA UK): The a-side is the least of Candleland, a New Order influenced dance number that's OK, but unusually derivative. No, the reason to get the 12" is for the two b-sides, his first recordings with his new backing band THE PRODIGAL SONS, especially "Fear of The Known" which swings and swivels so swavely and self-assuredly it has the same effect as "Bedbugs and Ballyhoo" only with a completely different sway rhythm. The stabbing, distorted, spindly guitar in the choruses both soars and cuts, which is a great effect! "Toad" flies on a weird keyboard sound, not his best tune, but convincing nevertheless. Another \$7-\$8 down the drain and you can buy the 2nd release of "Faith in Healing" which has "Fear of The Known" and also "Rocket Ship" on the back. What a scam! One has to spend \$14-\$16, just to get Mac's 3 b-sides? This is an outrage, the same atrocity perpetrated regularly by The House of Love, but us dedicated fans take the pill with a resentful gulp. The fact that "Rocket Ship" is a great song, the most rockin' thing Mac has recorded since he left Echo, helps a lot, and damn straight with an artist of his greatness, one wants to own every song he releases, but the slight bitter feeling remains. As a rotten guy once said in San Francisco, "Ever get the feeling you've been cheated?" Swindle indeed. Note: Worse is the U.S. release on Sire, which gives only one non-LP b-side, "Fear of The Known," passing up both "Rocket Ship" and "Toad" for 3 OTHER MIXES of the a-side and the last single "Proud to Fall!" I give up. This whole business sucks.

RED LETTER DAY—"Last Night" 7" (Released Emotions UK): Portsmouth England's Red Letter Day hit hard with their "Last Night" 45, equally as great as their fire-breathing "Take Me in Your Arms" the

last time they went 7". RAY replaces DAVIE on guitar, and though the latter had been the most talented musician, Ray is even better. He enlivens the classic mid-tempo punk a-side with tremendous yet simple sounding fills that would have made Gen-X's Rob Andrews happy. The riffs come on thick like the best of punk's onslaught, yet the songwriting and real emotion makes them feel current instead of some bogus try to bring back the spirit of '77. No thank you! Even when they trot out old VIBRATORS guitar hero KNOX to help out on their cover of Vibrators' "Street Heat," on the flip, he merely adds backing vocals while Ray keeps the hard sound coming. Once again, a 4th wave of UK punk may seem preposterous to many until they hear for themselves the greatness of Red Letter Day and Mega City Four, and both Snuff and Senseless Things are coming on now too. Chances are you're either too old, too tired, or too cynical if you can't get a kick out of young, well-played, well-written rock 'n' roll, that's really what this is. Pretty hot stuff. (PO Box 132, Acton, London, W3 8XQ, UK)



#31 SCRAWL LP



#32 SENSELESS THINGS LP

SCRAWL-SMALLMOUTH (Rough Trade): This is the LP where Scrawl puts it all together. Their 2 other LPs were crudely effective Wire-driven drone-pop records with plenty to sink one's teeth into ("Gutterball" especially). But instead of hurtling through another set of such elusive corkers, here they slow it down to a more comfortable yet still forward pace, chiseling out the songs more carefully and filing smooth the former rough edges with a new found patience, skill, and attitude. The slower tempos gives their material space to breathe, and most importantly, they're finally well produced, by the same GARY SMITH who put such a deep mystery to the new Chills LP. Smith maintains the fuzzed guitar edges, but clarifies them, and brings up the bottom end; now when great drummer CAROLYN O'LEARY pounds the floor tom (as on "Rot" and "Absolute Torture") it packs a thicker, low-end rumble, as does SUE HARSHE's bass hits. Smith also works on Sue and guitarist MARCY MAY's pitch without changing their unique delivery. This is a much more fully ripe Scrawl, it's hard to believe it's the same group that gave us Plus Also Too 3 years ago. Watching bands grow into greatness makes up for much of the disquiet over other favorites losing the way, and at last, Scrawl achieve excellence, on a well rounded, superb sounding, enticing and strong LP, the full flowering of what was once but a very promising, pretty bush. That they break all the limited "roles for women in rock" discussed by Tim Sommer 2 issues ago, while just going about their business naturally is a point in their favor that isn't even necessary to evoke! This is a great group, with a very advanced LP, period! (611 Broadway, NY, NY 10012)

SENSELESS THINGS-POSTCARD C.V. (Way Cool UK): Judging from their aborted set at London University last May, there was much to expect from this first LP, and this is even better than live. Almost moving right up there with Mega City 4 as the best punk inspired pop act in Britain (along with the pop inspired punk act Red Letter Day), there are a few sensational numbers on this LP, in particular the opening "Trevor" which is as great as a "way cool" guitar song gets, as well as "Sneaking Kisses," "Someone in You," "Drunk and Sloppy" (which borrows the riff to NAKED RAYGUN's "Soldier's Requiem," interesting since they supported Raygun at the show last May, and seem to be big U.S. punk fans - they even covered a DESCENDANTS song!) and the closing track, their only single to date, "Too Much Kissing." The guitar parts are well developed, there are nice vocal harmonies in the choruses, and the rhythm section is a supple sparkplug. The other 1/2 of the LP is like another band entirely, everything is three times as fast, more hardcore (like their "Busload to Bingo" on Underground Rockers Vol. 2), which is OK yet nowhere as good. Now if they do a whole LP of the more mid-tempo stuff.....For now this is still highly satisfying. **NOTE:** Way Cool was pressed and distributed by S.R.D., which quit when the parent company What Goes On folded, so now they've been picked up by Decoy, home of Mega City Four and Sink, etc. You can try writing Decoy at 231 Portobello Rd., London W11 1LT UK.



#33 ED KUEPPER EP



#34 999 Live LP

ED KUEPPER AND THE YARD GOES ON FOREVER-"Happy as Hell" EP 12" (Truetone/EMI AUS): When we spoke to Ed last issue, he said that though his 3rd solo LP (and major label debut, on Capitol here) had just been released here, it had been out for a year already in Australia, so he was already readying some new songs, and here's four of them. One is shockingly enough a new version of his old SAINTS' song, "Everybody's Fine," from the 3rd (and last by that original lineup with co-founder Kuepper) LP, 78's Prehistoric Songs! And to think, it was shocking enough to see him do "The Prisoner" from that album live at Spodeeodee in July '89! With its lighter touches leading to louder buildups, the female backing vocals, and the more soul swing, it's slightly different yet still very true to that old song. "Ghost of an Ideal Wife" and "New Bully in The Town" (the latter a long, sparse, bluesy number) are more wistful, with banjo (I believe) background plucking, and Kuepper's usual wry cynicism about relationships/blind expectations unrealized. This is another strong buy from the celebrated Mr. K. to add to the Saints/LAUGHING CLOWNS/solo canon, without even mentioning the first, best, most uptempo, and main track, which we hope will be included on a someday 4th LP, "Sometimes (I Can't Live with Anyone)." If this song is indeed the single, it continues Ed's hot streak from the four (four! We kid you not) sharp singles that were taken

from that last LP, Everybody's Got To. 10 smackers is a lot for four songs, so proceed with caution, but Ed-heads (like me) will eat this up with relish.

NINE NINE NINE-LIVE AND LOUD (Link UK): Big surprise! We knew 999 circa '79 (it doesn't say when this LP was recorded, but all material is from their first 3 LPs, 999, Separates which was called High Energy Plan here, + The Biggest Prize in Sport, and the way they botch the end of the 3rd LP "Stranger" it's a decent assumption it was a new song!) were a great group on record and live, but how were we to know such an exciting live recording existed of them? The sound quality is hot, and their best material blasts. "Let's Face It" is the perfect opening, even after all these years that "let's face it, the boy can't make it with girls" line is as amusing as it is ironic and sorry. "Hit Me" is a zippy wipeout, "Hollywood" swings, and best of all, a speeded up "Me and My Desire" (sounds like 40 RPM!) is even better than the studio version. Of Course "Homicide" closes the show, that song always is as familiar as it is subversively intriguing, their most popular standard. 999 show once again why they were the most popular of the groups that attempted to fuse the new sounds of punk with early rockabilly, r'n'b and most of all, the pub rock of the mid-70's (singer/guitarist NICK CASH was after all an alumnus of IAN DURY's KILBURN AND THE HIGH ROADS.) The critics and detractors called them "bar band" derisively, too jaded to join in the simple communal pleasure of "The Boys in the Gang" (as fraternal as the word "gang" can suggest) and its alter ego "Feelin' Alright With The Crew." 999 was always unashamed good-time attitude without the stupidity or party-mindlessness, an endearing fun band with intelligent and sometimes comical lyrics, beat and fresh energy. This is as good as introduction or fresh flashback than me and my desire wanted. Terrific! **NOTE:** 999 is still going too, after all these years, though we hear recently they finally had their first lineup change when bassist JON WATSON left the group. They and the Stranglers had gone the longest without one!



#35 LUSH MINI-LP

R.E.M.
CHRISTMAS '89

H.M. R.E.M. X-Mas 45

LUSH-SCAR EP (4AD): Actually the new Mad Love EP is much better than this admirable debut, but Jeff Kelson credibly reviews that in his column here. "Scarlet" is the choice on this excellent 6 song disc. Like their new label mates Pale Saints, they can glitter quietly like the best of 4AD yet wed the sparkle with a comely, breathy melody (on "Ethereal" as well). Also like Pale Saints, they can turn up the thermostat when it pleases them, like "Bitter" and the back-crashing "Second Sight," which seems as if it continually runs into a wall and hurls itself back. The guitars of MIKI BERENYI and EMMA ACLAND lash and "scar" with a counterblow. Berenyi is a good singer, her voice seems to come

from everywhere. Get that new one first, but pick this up too, some of this is actually even redone on Mad Love. More strong production from JOHN FRYER.

R.E.M.-"Christmas Single '89" (artists label): Limited edition 4500 copies 7" with excellent poster sleeve (an early live photo of the band) just for members of the R.E.M. fan club. "Good King Wenceslas" is (purposely?) awful, but the flip is a studio recording of their cover of MISSION OF BURMA's "Academy Fight Song!" Now this sucker is sensational! The song is great to begin with, and R.E.M. keep the essential snap in while still making it seem as if they wrote it! **MICHAEL STIPE** plays with the original melody slightly and enhances it, over the thudding drums of **BILL BERRY** to match **PETER PRESCOTT**'s original pounding. There's even a harsh banged piano (sounds like). This doesn't make the top 35 'cause it's not really available to the public, but it would be top 10 otherwise! REM show once again the punk rock in them (if the IGGY POP and '77 WIRE covers weren't enough!). Here's hoping they relent some day and give this a formal release on a b-side! The world should hear this! Recycled paper sleeve too. (to join club, send \$10 to POB 8032, Athens, GA 30603)



BOOT REPLEACEMENTS 45



BOOT X-RAY SPEX 45

THE REPLACEMENTS-Live Inconcerated (bootleg 7"): Smart of someone to bootleg what was until now just a highly sought after industry promo. It's 5 live songs, recorded with a mobile unit at the University of Wisconsin. "Talent Show" doesn't blast off like on TV, but like that appearance, it beats the bejesus out of the tame LP version once again! Hot stuff. Likewise, "Anywhere's Better Than Here" is dripping with the raunch that was only suggested in the studio. "Here Comes a Regular" jangles more live, depicting sorrowful cloistered barroom nowhereville with appropriate sadness. And it's always great to hear "Answering Machine," though it's too bad they don't do it full band like they usually do; the song is damn powerful with just guitar and voice, but with complete backing it reaches maximum warp. One of **PAUL WESTERBERG**'s best songs ever! The real reason to get this though, is the cover of **ONLY ONES**' "Another Girl, Another Planet," faithful to the original but Replacement-isized, the best version yet of a song everyone covers! The audience even sings along a bit on a few cuts. The sound quality is as excellent as bootlegs come (probably copied right off the CD!); top flight boot.

X-RAY SPEX-Live German TV Bootleg 7": Recorded in 1978, this is 'round album time, later than their other 2 live recordings. Forget their shabby "Oh Bondage Up Yours" from Live at the Roxy, that was either their 1st or 2nd gig. And this is much more intense than even "Let's Submerge" on Live at The Hope and Anchor! Yes, the sound quality is a little

81 muted, suggesting that, like most such bootlegs, this was recorded on a cassette and subsequently transferred to reel to reel, losing much of the original clarity. But, adjusting one's ears, this is the heaviest, grittiest, loudest, most blasting X-Ray Spex we've heard yet, much like their memorable CBGB gigs here 12 years ago (finally, a recording that captures that radiance), you can almost see roly poly **POLY STYRENE** poguing all over the stage as she did. Mostly, though, it's **JAK AIRPORT**'s guitar, so distorted it's like a car at the Indy 500, that does all the damage here. "Artificial" was always their best song, but even "Warrior in Woolworth's" sounds suddenly indignant! Only 500 of these suckers, get 'em while you can! **NOTE:** They just reissued the first Styrene solo LP Translucence, which sounds like an old Donovan record more than any X-Ray Spex followup. Hard to imagine many punks would be interested in this, though it's a fine, very meek and bubbling record. Hugo Largo used to cover the opening song on it!

78 OTHERS OF NOTE:

I seem to get 400-500 records in the mail every 6 months (in addition to the 50-100 or so I buy). Once again it's time to state, since in the past there have been those who've held a mistaken impression that I like everything I hear, that most records really "aren't worth the vinyl they're pressed on," to quote an old roommate. The classic abuse of the "anyone can do it" concept continues; while the freedom of expression of so many releases of interest is heartwarming, on the other hand, the decided deficiency in quality is mortifying. There has never been a time where good records outnumbered the bad. But these last 6 years or so, it seems everyone who's ever played a live show in their lives (and a number who have never have!) decides that the next step is to release a record, however undeveloped, unwanted, unmarketed, under-produced, and unlistenable such records are! The saddest thing is to hear people disowning their early records; perhaps such self-criticism would have been more useful then! On the flipside, the majors have plunged head-first into the post-modern alternative field, and as is their penchant, 98% of what is being signed and promoted under this banner is either faceless or worse, just the slick, watered down, safest version they can stomach for their corporate climate. For every Cure, XTC, or Banshees who might hover 'round the top '40, some frightful act with none of their creativity is being snapped up and advanced as being of their class.

I.E. most records we loathe, detest, despise, and otherwise refuse to review, easy as it is to get some cheap yucks out of trashing artists as so many of today's fanzines delight in. Really, that trait is pointless, immature, and of no ultimate utilitarian use to the reader; real criticism is insight, but most such fanzine reviews are more the level of the taunts of the insecure and superior. The truly bad reviews here are the result of disappointment in the sense that we had reason to expect far better, or else we would have ignored them completely too. Other neglected releases were really neither good nor bad, and caused no reaction at all! (is this worse than a negative reaction?). In most cases, if I have nothing to say about a record, I say nothing!

My thanks to both Ed Marshall and Jeff Kelson for reviewing the Springhouse 45; I asked neither to do so, and I'm a little embarrassed to have to print them, but my deal with them is I print everything they submit. Please be advised that both are strong acquaintances of mine, and thus

you have just cause to suspect a bias, but I appreciate their appraisals enough to print them.

AFGAN WHIGS-UP IN IT (Sub Pop): Cincinnati's Sub Pop entry are what you might get with mid-80's Replacements (mild vocal similarity), with Dinosaur's riffing buzz stuck through the Sub Pop hard rock blender, screaming and all. Bad comparisons, but this is heavy, stout stuff with all the ferocity the label routinely dishes up but with a few great songs ("Retarded" especially). It jams on the 70's too much for my tastes, but that's forgivable (1932 1st Ave, Suite 1103, Seattle, WA 98101)

AIRLINES- "Test" 7" (Susstones): Hoboken quartet that combines a choppy almost Gang of Four like rhythm guitar with a lead that mixes up grungy power overload and light picking. Bass and drums set up a post-punk drone pattern for the vocalist **JOHN TANZER** to intone coolly that this is just a tense. Not much comfort in that, is there! Effectively unnerving, harsh 7" debut! B-side is much the same, only with an up-tempo, power blast 4/4 beat, and **JIM DEROGATIS'** quick snare rolls. Worth picking up for the off-kilter, oooozing guitar over that hard rhythm (Box 6425, Minneapolis, MN, 55406)

ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE-LIVE AND LOUD (Link UK): Let's pretend that that last album The Perfect Crime was such a piece of crap, for a few reasons: 1) It was their only bad record. 2) It wasn't the songs' fault, it was their dubious decision to largely trade their hard guitar attack for overblown synthesizers; amongst all the old hits on this live LP, three cuts from that awful 2nd LP show up here and, played in the older sound's driving style, sound great! 3) They split up soon after its release in '88, and this live record documents their hot farewell gig that year in their home Turnbridge Wells, England. In fact, it's easy to venture that this is the best of their 2 studio and 2 live albums, 'cause it marries their early grit with their later improved songwriting! Banging right off with their all time (largely overlooked) classic "For You," this sucker rocks hard and with real gusto through some fine, some funny songs, with their ever "so what" attitude. The sad thing, is that for entertainment's sake, they were as much comedians as a great band, so no one took them seriously when they dropped the hilarious romps through the filth and the fury of modern pub society, even though they remained a great band! Singer **ANIMAL** (**NICK KRAMER** on the later records like this one) went from shouting like a drunken bouncer to actually singing (with a social conscience, too!) and nobody wanted to allow it! In addition to "For You," old favorites like their best-loved "We Are the League," the **RALPH McTELL** trashing that was their debut single in '81 "Streets of London," "Woman," "Let's Break The Law," "Wreck a Nowhere," "Can't Stand Rock 'n' Roll" and a Sex Pistols' like bastardization of **EDDIE COCHRAN**'s "Something Else" come rasping out of your speakers (or headphones, I suppose). Put this all on one cassette, add the sadly missing trio of the stomach-splitting "Animal," & "So-What" (which couldn't be included 'cause it's still banned in the UK for being obscene!) and their last great single "Out in the Wasteland" from '84 and you've got the best of a band few realized was a top r'n'r band, and a rare one with a sense of humor at that! (Their gigs here in '82 with UK Subs were a scream). Excellent record! (POB 164, London SE13 5QN, UK)

THE BIG THING-IN THE ELBOW ROOM (Rave): I don't listen to thrash hardcore much any more save for the odd Bad Religion LP (and those guys are the only thrashers who are incredible songwriters/singers), but here's an exception. These three straight looking males are a ferocious, down and dirty powerhouse, with full-on chops, big time power and a massive sound. In fact, this is better than most of the vintage '81-'84 Boston, DC and Detroit (and UK oi) stuff! Yes the genre is tiresome to all but the newcomers, but whenever it's played this well we stand up and take notice. (P.O. Box 40075, Philadelphia, PA 19106).

BIG WHEEL-EAST END (Giant/Dutch East): **Ex-SQUIRREL BAIT** singer **PETER SEARCY** finally emerges with a new Louisville, KY band that blows away Bastro if you ask this reviewer. That said, this is still not enough to make one forget that older, great quintet, though in places Big Wheel recall their work. Perhaps this is the direction a 3rd Squirrel Bait LP might have headed as the band members grew up more, with strong song writing, and Searcy's usual impeccable, straining passion singing. But, all cracks at Bastro aside, Johnson and Grubbs were a big part of Bait's aggressiveness, which is the big thing missing here. **GLENN TAYLOR** and **MIKE BRADON**, gtr. and bass, respectively, are good but no match, they lack the fire, the edge, the hammer that elevated songs like "Kid Dynamite" into the nether regions. Perhaps it's not fair to compare; Big Wheel deserve to stand in their own right, but if that's the case, they're merely a good rock band with an exceptional singer, possibly even a hot live one (the production here is too tame for the power group underneath it; in particular, the vocals should have been mixed lower, the guitars up!!!). Us greedy people want more. (PO Box 800, Rockville Centre, NY 11571)

BLACK WATCH- "The Ginger Men" 7" (Eskimo): (This review originally appeared in Rockpool) "We Don't Need The English" sang L.A.'s Bags 12 years ago. And though these days it seems the Brits corner the market on beautiful, ethereal pop singles, while US bands deal in grungy soot, here's L.A.'s Black Watch to provide the exception. With a sound that recalls the heyday of the Creation label circa Bodines, Primal Scream, & Jasmine Minks, this L.A. outfit not only shimmers brilliantly on "The Ginger Men," but they drift on a scrumptious violin by **J'ANNA** that suggests the very spring that's blooming now. (Aww. How's that for corny?). Not sure if this is a permanent band; 3/5 of this group are also in **THE CLAY IDOLS** (whose 2nd record also came out, goodie), but here's hoping they keep it together. This is so good, we'll pardon the nearly unrecognizable b-side version of "Eleanor Rigby," OK but nothing to rave about. (924 5th St., Suite 9, Santa Monica, CA 90403)

BREAKING CIRCUS- "Home of The Brave" 7": Available only as a free giveaway with a recent issue of **The Pope**, this is likely Minneapolis' Breaking Circus' last recordings since they've now split up. Or are they? Actually, this is just B.C. main-man **STEVE BJORKLAND** by himself, with a synth of some sort, a guitar and a drum machine, meaning that he could conceivably release as many more B.C. records like this that he pleased, though that doesn't seem likely from the interview in the mag. These two selections are electronic home demos like Pete Shelley was doing 'round Homosapien, though Bjorkland throws in claps of harsh guitar in places where he sees fit. Both sides are covers and sound

little like the originals. The a-side is indeed the NAKED RAYGUN song from '86's All Rise, but so silent and shushed it's almost direful. "Warhead" retains the U.K. SUBS prototype bass line (see '80's Brand New Age or the 45), but is mechanized like Kraftwerk, Heaven 17 or even Yazoo might do it! Electronic punk is always welcome! The Pope is available from: POB 146882, Chicago, IL 60614.

THE CAVEGURLS - "Just Out of Reach" 7" EP (Skull Duggery): 60's revival nostalgia with the clothes and bad recording quality has never been well liked around here, but this time we'll make an exception. Yes, these Minneapolis "gurls" (oh, come on) ought to realize that modern production is no crime. And they should remember the people they're copying were not reviving anything when they were doing this originally. But Cavegurls show superb taste in their two covers, with a harsh, grooving version of **THE KINKS**' "I Need You" (b-side "Set Me Free" '65) that takes out **DAVE DAVIES** classic "All Day and All The Night"/"You Really Got Me" grunge and replaces it with a more clipped rhythm guitar sound. Even better (and more obscure), they also revup **THE HOLLIES**' "Little Lover" from their little known debut LP in '64 Stay With The Hollies, just the kind of hot r'n'b the original days of the British Invasion were known for. It's funny to see '90's US folks copying '60's UK folks copying '50's US folks, but good music is good music! Elsewhere "Theme From Cavegurl" is their own Monkees theme ("We're The Cavegurls/And you can't say no" - hey hey we're the cavegurls?), with a forceful back beat (this girl JEANNE can really beat the skins), and "Just Out of Reach" sounds like the Yardbirds or Animals. Too backward looking, and vocals need improvement. But at least they can rock 'n roll better than most of these types, with a genuine sense of naivety and love of playing. And if your bag is the Count 5 or 13th Floor Elevators, this is a great cave. (PO Box 734, Hopkins, MN 55343).

CHOPPER-4 PLAY 12" EP (Animal Five): (This review appeared in Rockpool) New band dept.: New Haven trio Chopper is centered around singer/guitarist STEVO late of BLEACHED BLACK, but on this debut EP they bear little resemblance. Openly comparing themselves to The Rich Kids (ah, a band with taste! Yes, you can hear Steve New in songs like "You're Tearing Me Up"), one can also imagine them opening for The Skids, Professionals, or '79-'80 Weirdos with this big guitar dominated, anthemic sounding, soaring rock/pop. If Chopper isn't as good as the above, it's only 'cause they didn't mix Stevo's guitar loud enough, and overall the production by the group and **MOB/MURPHY'S LAW** guitarist JACK FLANAGAN is merely adequate, as expected from limited budgets. But the material is good, spirited, energetic and melodic, great for a first disc. All four songs, culminating in the fine "Nice Girls (Don't Explode)" are a blast from the past that sounds current. (PO Box 2383, Milford, CT, 06460)

CROCODILE SHOP - "Measure By Measure" EP 7" (Susstones): Like David Bowie, **MICHAEL HALE** (formerly **MICK LONDON** when Croc Shop were known as **MOD FUN**) keeps changing styles and persona with each record! The previous two Croc records were an EP of light strumming pop and an LP (produced by **CHAMELEONS**'/ **REEGS** guitarist **DAVE FIELDING**) of louder, psychedelic rock. This new single bears no resemblance to either. Without drummer **JOHN FIGLER** (who more recently had returned to **LORD JOHN**), Hale goes with a drum machine and converts to a darker dance sound a la the '83 efforts of such bands as Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, Sisters

of Mercy, and most of all, March Violets (think "Religious as Hell" or "Snake Dance"). Hale's vocals are equally unfamiliar; formerly a high pitched boyish singer, suddenly he's got a low growl moan like the above mentioned. Overall a pretty good effort in this familiar style. If they want to keep metamorphasizing, no complaints here. (Box 6425, Minneapolis, MN 55406)

THE CURE-DISINTEGRATION, (Elektra) "Pictures of You" (Friction/Polydor UK): This has been out so long (just bought it now!), sorry! I do see the comparisons to Faith, definitely downcast **ROBERT SMITH** has put the frosty wind, the long shadow back into the Cure, a long hour of threatening weather and electrical storm lightning like "Fascination Street." After the miss-step Head on the Door and the better but poorly edited Kiss Me Kiss Me Kiss Me (should have been a single LP), this is far better planned and executed, certainly their finest since Pornography and bits of The Top. Mood is the order, it's neither welcoming nor ingratiating in any way, even when the lyrics suggest a serenity the music belies. What it is is foreboding, a sense of anticipation in the slow moving bass of old and the more patient hypnotic Smith guitar (17 Seconds/A Forest guitar is back!). The thing that's most Faithfully is **BORIS WILLIAMS**' suddenly barebones drumming, a large change that would lead one to believe that recently departed **LOL TOLHURST** had forsaken the keyboard bank and once again picked up the sticks. Yep, 2 hits in a measure is not exactly a busy fill! Great to see **SIMON GALLUP** back on simple bass lines too. Much of the credit should also go to producer **DAVE ALLEN**, who made Head on the Door far too murky, and who also made the otherwise amazing Chameleons Strange Times a tad too dark, but this is his best job since Sisters of Mercy's First and Last and Always. It's '79 in '89 and yet it doesn't sound dated. The Cure deserve every iota of their massive success for keeping their artistic hunger to give one an experience, not just a record! NOTE: B-side of the long, winding and splendid "Pictures of You" is a live version of another new LP track "Prayers For Rain" recorded at Wembley, London's Giant Stadium. It's good, but the studio version is much more affecting in its paranoia.

DATURA SEEDS-WHO DO YOU WANT IT TO BE (Toxic Shock): (This review originally appeared in Rockpool) Interest is piqued in Datura Seeds in that its singer is former **ZERO BOYS** guy **PAUL MAHERN**, but this is another keetle of fish (where did that expression come from anyway?). Mahern still resembles a more serious Leonard Graves (Dickies), but Datura Seeds are a rockin' power-chorded post-punk band with slower rhythmic touches, and short bursts of Gang of Four-like jagged pounding Zero Boys never showed.

ANTI-NOWHERE L. LIVE

D.O.A. new LP



The songwriting is far more mature too, with everpresent hooks that aren't so simple, and (gad) pulling harmonies in the chorus. The material is varied but dynamic and first rate. Having expected little, I've ended up playing this 10 times, a first rate album! (see their cuts on Black Brittle Frisbee too). (POB 43787, Tucson, AZ 85733)

DIDJITS-HORNET PINATA (Touch and Go): 3rd LP for Illinois' Didjits is more of the same. Good! There's something almost goofy about their suped-up, high octane motor blasts, and those screamed vocals by guitarist **RICK SIMS** sound like a bunch of kids on a roller-coaster who thought they'd gotten on the Tunnel of Love! Eyaahhhhhh! Sims guitar is so prominent (as always) it's like the proverbial finger in the electric socket. Like The Three Stooges at a high society ball, letting this madman loose on your innocent looking stereo is like asking for a pie in the face. The attack hiccups along in their tight wound, super-sputter, supersonic overdrive basket-case manor, snare drum rolls arriving and departing. These guys do admire Little Richard and Jerry Lee Lewis a lot (smart lads), but this is what you get by putting those types into the punk trash compactor. "Killboy Powerhead" is their greatest hit ever, yes, even better than "Plate in My Head." The tamest thing here is the cover of **JIMI HENDRIX**'s "Foxy Lady" (so what does that tell you?), and even this is mega-grungy with a short-circuiting guitar solo that sounds like it was recorded on 78 RPM. The cover of **MCS**'s "Call Me Animal" (what, no "Rambling Rose?") is neat too. This music is the true antithesis of light FM, what all parents fear when their cherubs buy turntables, it's rock 'n' roll as hell! Crazy man, crazy. (POB 255520, Chicago, IL 60625)

D.O.A.-MURDER (Restless/Enigma): (This review appeared in Rockpool) D.O.A. have released records on many indies for twelve years, even if they've had as many lineups as The Chills. Majors have often been too conservative to embrace politically conscious bands, but D.O.A. have never lost theirs, without ever getting heavy handed or preachy. Their new LP Murder, their 5th, continues their progression from red hot early 80's punk band to more commercial bad ass guitar rock, but they still have the riffs, the attitude, and **JOEY (SHITHEAD) KEITHLEY**'s bear growl vocals on songs like "We Know What You Want," "Banana Land" (old-style rockers), "Afrikana Security," "Concrete Beach," (N.Y. Dolls' like bluesy harmonica) and more amusing numbers like the funky (think "Dance of Death") "Guns, Booze and Sex" and a cover of **CREEDENCE**'s "Midnight Special." Best of all they reprise three old songs: "Waiting For You - Part 2" rips with the same fury that part 1 did on '81's classic Hardcore '81). "The Warrior Lives Again" updates 85's Let's Wreck The Party's original, and best of all, bassist **SUNNY BOY (WIMPY) ROY** reaches back to his great old band **THE SUBHUMANS** (the better Vancouver one) for a new version of "No Productivity," an obscure track from the b-side of their '80 "Firing Squad" single. Though the production is alittle too 70's hard rock, this kicks butt on just about every heavy guitar band that thinks they're tough shit! (PO Box 3628, Culver City, CA 90231-3628)

DRUMMING ON GLASS- "Tear It Down" 7" (Aurora): I believe this is this Boston band's 2nd single (hard to get info on obscure groups), the followup to their smart debut on Dog records in '87, "Right Next to Me" b/w "When Everything Happens." Signing to Aurora, Galaxie 500's old label, should help

their visibility somewhat, certainly for the 2nd time in a row it's deserved. They have a thick, ringing, effects-filled guitar sound with real drums/bass power. The lyrics/choruses are kept simple for maximum impact, there's even a background sitar to add additional flavorings. Theirs is a big sound, with sneaky wallop and an equally subliminal roar. Just a trio, but we're talking an accomplished, knowing, confident sound, a heavy sound without the standard almost tiresome grunge, and decent material to match. This is a definite check out. (PO Box 2596, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130)

ELECTROMIX- "Getting Away With It" (Factory): **NEW ORDER**'s **BERNIE SUMMER**, **PET SHOP BOYS**' **NEIL TENNANT** and **JOHNNY MARR** team up to make a New Order record better than most of the New Order records of late. Marr does some nice guitar work, and the song is catchy enough, but this dance dance dance stuff just isn't satisfying enough. One wonders when these behemoth talents will give us something more than a happy tune to dance to and hum without conviction.

THE EMBARRASSMENT-GOD HELP US (Bar None/Restless): We got one back! Yes **BILL GOFFRIER** is still in **BIG DIPPER**, who are newly signed to Epic and must tour hard to support their new LP, so this has to be a side project for him. But that Kansas' Embarrassment reunited at all and made an LP is victory enough. Just hearing a new recording of their old, old single "Sex Drive" is enough of a pleasure. Add in other greats like "Train of Thought," which drives along on a sharp, clicking off-beat groove, and the car-driving "Podman," and you know you've got something here. The cover of **CREEDENCE**'s "Burning Love" is OK too. The sound is crisp (the best production they've ever enjoyed, as done by the band and longtime Boston knob-twister **LOU GIARDANO**), the band sounds refreshed and focused, with cranking crackerbox guitars and more bop than most new bands. In particular, it's good to see **WOODY GEISSMANN** revert back to his old sturdy back-beat thumping after having to restrain in over the years during his stint in **DEL FEUCOS**, he's allowed to be a lot more busy and apply rhythmic touches in this his older band (the drumming on "Lifespan" is right on the mark!). Comebacks are not often successful in the studio when it comes to spitting out new material (as opposed to the more easy route of just doin' the old stuff), so this is twice as impressive. This may even be the best of their releases! Now if only The Micronots would reform...!!! (POB 1704, Hoboken, NJ 07030)

THE FALL- "Telephone Thing" (Cog Sinister/Phonogram UK): It's more likely that we'll someday find the fountain of youth and abolish taxes than expect a few months (weeks? days? hours? micro-seconds?) to go by without a new Fall single. Some people brush their teeth less. Fortunately, there's still quagmires of **MARK E. SMITH**'s brain yet to explore. This is not one of those Fall singles where they stumble on a glittering prize of greatness; no, this is the more typical Fall experience, just the band hanging around as an excuse for Smith to rant as he has for 13 years. The backing is a minor funk pattern accented by wah-wah guitar and spiny after-thought keyboard, just a pattern with no destination. But Smith is as deranged and snarling as ever (meaning, he's got the harmonizer on his voice turned up full blast, as he did on the old singles like "Roche Rumble" and the great "Totally Wired", it's a scourge!). Smith forges a career

out of coasting without arousing our ire, 'cause he makes the most ordinary, half-fast, slipshod B.S. sound perverted, disruptive, dangerous, and unsettling. It's that voice! Those effects! Most lousy records never sound so good as his do.

FRICITION WHEEL "Something Tells Me" 7" (Singles Only Label/Dutch East): Heard a lot about this NJ quartet, and interest is further heightened by their choice of producer, **BOB MOULD**, who along with Maxwells' **STEVE FALLON** and **NICK HILL** runs this label. The a-side is merely competent and likeable, a solid sound, but there's not much to commend it. It lacks that flash of greatness we demand from our singles. The b-side "Won't Fall Down" is somewhat better, with a greater sense of direct urgency in their strumming pop, a more catchy song, and yes, more "friction." Not the greatest, but the potential is clearly there, judging from the flip. (611 Broadway, Suite 616, NYC, 10012)

FUGAZI "Song Number One" 7" (Dischord): (This review appeared in Rockpool) D.C.'s Dischord label have a well earned reputation for self-sufficiency, cheap prices, and fair business for a decade, dating back to those old (now rare) 7 inch singles by Teen Idles, Henry Rollins' S.O.A. and that juggernaut Minor Threat, whose singer and drummer **IAN MACKAYE** and **JEFF NELSON** still run the label with friends. Here, MacKaye and his label stars Fugazi have revived that old Dischord feature, the 7". "Song Number One" picks up from their previous 2 EPs, rockin' steady in that rhythm collision of post-punk and reggae they excel in. The lyrics wisely cry freedom from the vapid fashion consciousness and localism that is the antithesis to the indie ethic (punk to present), winding up in the sing-a-long "It's nothing" chorus. "Joe Number One" is a similar beat-crazy instrumental, and "Break In" is their most furious number to date, with **GUY PICCIOTTO** screaming his guts out to the break-neck pace. Feverish stuff! New LP any moment. (3819 Beecher St. NW, Wash. DC 20007)

ALAN GINSBERG THE LION FOR REAL (Great Jones/Island): Ginsberg is an obviously erudite and famous man of words and attitude, and those with the patience for poetry logically revere his books and readings. But this is not the first time he's made the mistake of pitting his cadences against the competing rhythms of backing music (though as he observes in the liner notes, at least this time he's not singing! 10 years ago he used to yodel!), which distracts from the images and the bearing of his naked voice. The whole point of poetry is that it requires great concentration, to take in each word as a precious gift from the gods of imagination. Brave, charged words thrust upon dead attentive silence can have the power of a stroke of lightning on the brain; with the music, it's like trying to study for a test and have sex at the same time. It just doesn't work. One or the other please! Buy a Ginsberg book instead, and sit where it's quiet, sound it out to yourself! You'll have a much better (and cheaper) experience.

THE HARDONS LOVE IS A BATTLEFIELD OF WOUNDED HEARTS (Taang!): Too bad it doesn't have their last Aussie 45 here, "Just Being With You." That's their best stuff, though these 12 songs are melodic, big chord '77 punk by these maturing ex-Ramones-heads (not that they left that behind, just they sound better at it and their songs have much bigger hooks). There's always a place for stellar, fast/slow three



DRUMMING ON GLASS 45

FUGAZI 7" EP

chord punk (with hot lead playing) with a big C for catchy (see "You're a Tease"); one would hope they'd branch out from the always high energy formula on occasion (and we don't mean the neo-metal slaughter "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" and "Been Had Before"), come up for air as they say in kissing circles, but it's always torpedoes ahead for these guys. An occasional quieter song would do them a lot of good! In small doses it's great though, isn't it? (POB 51, Auburndale, MA 02166)

HETCH HETCHY-SWOLLEN (Texas Hotel): 2nd LP is far better than the first! Well produced by **TIM SOMMER** (a talent we didn't know he had, but no lie, this sounds wonderful!) at the famous Fort Apache studios, the beautiful violin-tinged brightness is well countered by **LINDA STIPE**'s hard bass sound. Her OH OK days influenced the double bass direction **HUGO LARGO** later took; the other 3 members of the late H.L. are also involved here, and in places this sounds like the Hugos, albeit with drums and sometimes fast tempos! Vocals even remind of a cross between Mimi Goese and Siouxsie Sioux, if you can picture it! Nice tapestries throughout, an alternatively mollifying and belligerent LP, with strong, developed ideas and varied instrumentation in abundance. (712 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401)

INSPIRAL CARPETS "Move" (Cow UK): I lost the review I wrote of their last single "Find Out Why," but it's just as well. What I was complaining about has been rectified on this one, namely their songwriting rut, the increasing tedium of hearing the same song and style over and over. "Move," like Wedding Present's "My Favorite Dress" finally breaks the mold (let's hope unlike the Wedding P. they don't go right back to it!), a slower (finally!) number with an entirely different rhythm and feel, and a better chorus for us to sing to (who, us?). "Out of Time" may be back to the old mold sold in the past, but at least it's manic and short. "Move In" is more like the a-side, with a lovely guitar line swooping from above in a way they never tried before, enough to believe they've come to grips with the lack of variety that caused their otherwise OK University of London show in May '89 to break down. The organ is still that Doors/Animals/Stranglers farfisa sound, but even these parts show more thought than previously! Perhaps they will finally justify the hype expended on them over there; certainly this is their best effort since the now-rare debut **DAVE FIELDING** (CHAMELEONS/REEGS) produced EP. Hope yet!

JERRY'S KIDS KILL KILL KILL (Taang!): 7 Years ago, bands like Void and Jerry's Kids came to New York and gave us a foreshadowing of the metal-thrash scene that would emerge much later in this country.

In their short pants and long hair, they looked more like the sons of AC/DC than the brothers of SSD, who also soon went metal. They're still around, and still pounding craniums senseless with an attack so ferocious and pounding it's a wonder they, like Lemmy, aren't deaf! Though nowhere near as fast paced thrash as their origins in This is Boston Not L.A. in '81, they're still quite quick, and frightening, the kind of wall of steel onslaught the early hardcore scene was famous for. Can't say I've got much time or patience for this stuff, in fact it was only mildly interesting back then, as the excessive and too wild extreme of the tuneful intensity of the Bad Brains, Minor Threat's and Scream's of the world. But, for those about to rock, salute Jerry's Kids, this stuff smokes. (PO Box 51, Auburndale, MA 02166)

THE JONESES (HOLLYWOOD JONESES)-TITS AND CHAMPAGNE (Trigon): L.A.'s The Joneses, who've been around for 8-9 years, are forced to change their name to "The Hollywood Joneses" because a new major label band (which stinks, incidentally) comes along now with the same name. That's hardly fair, but it just goes to show for the 1,000,000th time, that in America's legal system, the side of the money and the lawyers is always right, no matter how wrong they may be! As for the record, you may remember Joneses for their Johnny Thunders' Heartbreakers like sound of their early records, especially the great "Criminals in my Car" b-side to "Jonestown," as well as their cuts on various L.A. compilations and their two EPs. Here it is 1990, they haven't changed much at all, except to add ex-T.S.O.L. and original **CATHEDRAL OF TEARS** keyboard player **GREG KUEHN** (see the immortal LP Beneath The Shadows) to tinkle the r'n'b ivories, making them sound more like Thunders' older band, New York Dolls now! Singer/guitarist **JEFF DRAKE** and (ex-KLAN) **STEVE OLSON**, moved from guitar to bass, remain from the old days. **ALEX GIBSON** guests on one track. Three of the six selections are covers, one the ubiquitous "Route 66," plus "Bad Attitude" and a rocked up version of **HANK WILLIAMS'** "Your Cheatin' Heart" with Kuehn punishing the piano like Jerry Lee or Screaming Jay might! The preponderance of covers shows Joneses are still more concerned with being a bad-ass dirty rock 'n' roll band than anything else, which is why they're still enjoyable even though since day one their style has been overly familiar! The EP title is admittedly a bit of a put-off (pretty stupid, folks), but otherwise their attitude is in the right place, not a bad comeback at all. And, Kuehn, as usual, is one of the best piano players in rock 'n' roll! (6837 Hanna Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91303)

KINGS OF OBLIVION-"Gotta Love Me" 7" (Dionysus): L.A.'s KOB don't try to hide their great love of the tough sound of Detroit circa Stooges or MC5, no they revel in it. These guys should tour Australia where this hard nosed stuff is king, they could support New Christs in a second with this kind of heavy edge and simple three chord rock, with customary spittin' writhin' cursin' vocals. **CHIP & TONY KINMAN** would have to be amused at the way KOB have blatantly ripped off **THE DILS'** "Class War" for "Only You to Blame" (this is what you call robbed blind), but if you're going to steal, steal from good stuff! Heavy Garage rock this simple is a tradition, mean, nasty, uncompromising, loud, familiar, catchy and likely to ruin any polite party. So it ain't strikingly original. Who says it had to be to hit you in the gut? Like a loud burp after a good beer? (PO Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91607)

LOVERS AND OTHER MONSTERS-IN MY MOOD BALCONY (Den of Iniquity): I should say up front that last year I sat in on drums for this band when their drummer was unable to make their show with us (Springhouse) in Boston, I learned the set that afternoon. This I guess is why I rate a thank you on the sleeve! Thus, as it happens I know half of these songs without having ever seen the band live (from the audience at least!). So how to review it? First off, there is still no permanent drummer; instead a drum machine keeps the time. It's just guitarist/singer/songwriter **TONY SCHINELLA** and his sidekick **AKIHIDE SAKAI** showcasing Schinella's abilities. Tony has a vast array of sounds to keep the LP interesting, and the songs are fully developed, which is a rare and oh so valuable commodity. He does needs to add some more resonance to his voice, which occasionally comes off a bit stiff, but that'll come, and there's no arguing with his fluid guitar phrasings + creative passages. He's already a good interpretive player (often he shows his Will Sergeant influences too, check the solo on "Around You"). This is a surprisingly good 1st LP; the only flaw is that it has the feel of a project instead of a band, a recording rather than a record. Tony should get a finished group together and play live often to tighten this all up; it needs to drink in the clutching embrace of a group in harmony, more than just a set of songs. 'Cause the important things (material and great guitar) are already in place! (POB 936, Astor Station, Boston, MA 02215)

THE LURKERS-LIVE AND LOUD (Link UK): Live from the large Hammersmith Odeon, wow! Lurkers were so bad at Max's in the late 70's they were laughable, literally. That drummer **ESSO** was so inept he gave new meaning to the idea "he couldn't play," and their songs were like paint-by-numbers uninspiring duh-punk. They got better when they came back on Clay records in '81, and this is OK, the drumming is at least steady! Guitarist **PETE STRIDE** and bassist **NIGEL MOORE** remain from the old days, so they run through a lot of old ones ("Ain't Got a Clue," "I Don't Need to Tell Her," "Just 13," which is smartly dedicated to **BILL WYMAN** (!), "New Guitar in Town," "Freak Show," BO DIDDLEY's "Pills," and the girl group classic "Then I Kissed Her"). But 19 songs is just too much run of the mill punk for one sitting. It's good, it's way better than at Max's (!), and Stride's a good player, but the lack of great songwriting is still holding 'em back. Ah well. (Box 164, London SE13 5QN UK)

THE MAGNOLIAS-DIME STORE DREAM (Twin/Tone): 3rd LP from killer Minneapolis quartet, their first with excellent new rhythm section of **KYLE KILLORIN** (bass) and **TOM COOK** (drums) joining guitarists original members **TOM LISCHMANN** and **JOHN FREEMAN**. Hard to argue with their twin guitar simple punk-pop; they're probably sick to death of being called the "heirs of Soul Asylum and Replacements," two older Twin/Tone Minny groups that graduated to the majors, ("Coming on Too Strong" especially sounds like some goofball outtake from Sorry Mom Forgot to Take Out the Trash), but they sound like they'd fit in snugly with either's early works, and besides, they're arguably equals, not pretenders! We all like this kind of sound, it comes cranking out of the radio when we're just about to give up, that thick, dense, hard-played sound that seems so familiar and comfortable, yet grabs us and takes us for a spin. The band is tight, they rock hard but with a nice flow, the hooks and riffs deeply satisfy, and one's head bops along hurriedly. Each time it's played it starts digging it's steely claws in you, the

up-front charm of Freeman's voice is even disarming, but this is pretty damn hot anyway, one of America's finest rock 'n roll bands! Freeman knows a good song (ahh, there's the rub), and he and mates keep the pseudo hits coming from start to finish; They've not lost their considerable edge through 5 years and 3 long players. These guys give you the energy usually associated with bad things like caffeine Glad to know someone in the U.S. indie scene still knows how to make guitar rock with real sus, real drive, and yet honest affection, and some subtlety. "Don't See That Girl" is one of the finest songs you'll hear all year! Good, exhilarating, strong record that you won't just play and hide for a while. (2541 Nicollet Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55404)

THE MEKONS-ROCK 'N' ROLL (A&M): Mekons come storming back to the original cacophony of some of their early inspired late 70's work (see "Teeth," "Where Were You," "Work all Week" and the debut Quality of Mercy LP), with now just hints of the cajun excursion they took with LPs like Fear and Whiskey when they originally resurfaced mid-decade. On songs like "Memphis, Egypt" "Empire of the Senseless," "Blow Your Tuneless Trumpet" and "Amnesia" (with a Strummer-like bellow, these last two could have been Clash singles) they even manage a dense roar that places them firmly back in their punk roots. Mekons were never brilliant songwriters, but in the places where the material lags, the provocative lyrics maintain one's attention. Mekons are fed up with big business rock 'n' roll, phony stars, willful stupidity, political indifference, drugs (the penetrating, horror-silly nursery rhyme "Cocaine Lil") sex exploitation and other ignorance, and we should be too. Not a great album, but an OK one with much food for thought and re-examination.

MOVING TARGETS-"Away From Me" (Taang!): Moving Targets keep it coming, on the heels of the great 2nd LP (reviewed by Ed Marshall elsewhere), with a jumping new single, and we're told they're already recording a 3rd album to be called Fall. This is superb news; singer/guitarist **KENNY CHAMBERS** is too big a talent to spend his days merely as a side man in **BULLET LA VOLTA**. Here you get 2 new songs + the opener on Brave Words "Falling" recorded live. The a-side, which previews Fall, is a Husker-Du like high voltage pop rocker, only with far more powerful drumming from the ace **CHUCK BRADY** - the comparisons to the Huskers are always in Chambers' bombardment of sound; like Mould's it's ashen hot and fills every corner of your speakers with trickling steam. But their styles are very different. The other new one, the also live "Selfish" is (surprise) a thrasher that harks back to their early days 7 years ago (see Bands That Could Be God sampler). Desperate but forgettable. No, it's the a-side and the live "Falling" you'll want, this damn group is a ferocious trio of guts, muscle, determination, hell-fury and hooks as deep as the Charles River. (POB 51, Auburndale, MA, 02166)

THE NUNS-DESPERATE CHILDREN (Posh Boy): Add Nuns to the list of great ex-punks polluting the atmosphere these days with the sort of disgusting commercial rock guitar proto-metal excess drivel doo-doo they were once set up to be the alternative to (see Slaves and Tender Fury reviews for two other such jokers). And when they're not fouling the air with the typical pompous mess, they're doing a crass disco version of their great old single "Walking The Beat," which spellbound underground New Yorkers a decade ago. Even the fairly faithful update of their first single from 12 years ago

87 "Suicide Child" (the first 415 record) adds obnoxious bursts of Queen-like guitar and a pointless extended part, why ruin gold for rust? Shame thy name is ex-punks! The liner notes suggest that their continued existence has caused "consternation to many," not hard to see why! Their last comeback LP a few years ago, Rumania wasn't that bad, but with the exception of two OK tracks, the Blondie-ish (singer **JENNIFER MIRO**, who funny enough used to live in my apartment in the late 70's before I did, was always compared to Debbie Harry) "It's a Dream," and "My Religion," which brings back memories with **JEFF OLENER**'s old creepy voice, this LP is toxic waste-product. It's even sadder to think this is 3/5 (drummer **JEFF RAPHEAL** also remains) of the Frisco group that relocated to NY and did so many great shows at Max's, CBGB and Club Hollywood, boy could they use **ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO** back instead of this awful **LESLIE SPRING**, yuck! How disappointing; this stuff stinks. **NOTE:** Engineered/mixed by **BAD RELIGION'S BRETT GUREWITZ**!

THE ONLY ONES-THE PEEL SESSIONS LP (Strange Fruit UK): I agree with guitarist **JOHN PERRY**, quoted in the liner notes. This is their best LP, funny since it's released a decade after their passing. One has merely to hear the early versions of the later Even Serpents Shine cuts "From Here to Eternity," "Miles From Nowhere" and especially (2 years before the LP!) "In Betweens" to appreciate fully once again how crucial these Peel Session LPs are for fans. Even "Another Girl Another Planet," so familiar in its single version, sounds positively refreshed. As do "Why Don't You Kill Yourself" and "Oh, Lucinda." The best thing about Only Ones is that they were just barely on the outskirts of every movement of their time, punk, post-punk, new wave, pub-rock, psychedelia, goth, power-pop (closest, but their guitars were stronger), you name it. They were a good rock band, too fresh to be top 40, yet too polished to comfortably slot in the new vanguard. But everyone knows **PETER PERRETT** was a truly gifted songwriter, and his quivering vocal, like his contemporary Pete Shelley with a stuffed nose, has always been ingratiating. Here it is take it. **NOTE 1:** Only pity: no "Trouble in the World" or "Lovers of Today." **NOTE 2:** If you dig this, get the recently released live LP on Skyclad, reviewed last issue by Tim Broun.

OUR AMERICAN COUSINS-Nitrobaby" 7" (Chop Suey): Local quartet. Song starts out so much like "Dot Dash" by Wire, thought it was a cover at first! Heavy treble bass sound like that first Nihilistics' EP. Heavy floor tom driven mean and nasty sounding band, but singer **MIKE CONSTANT** has a more melodic idea of how things should be, in fact he almost sounds like Mike Stipe, a strangely cheerful voice

MOVING TARGETS LP

PAGANS 45



(US &) ALL OUR FRIENDS ARE SO MESSED UP

for such foreboding sounding material. B-side "Only in My Head" is creepier, with unearthly sounding guitar (think McGeough in the Banshees) setting off a lighthearted tamborine as Constant sings his lament of his own brain's torture. Good debut. (1186 Broadway Apt. 611, NYC 10001)

THE PAGANS—"Us & All of Our Friends Are So Messed Up" (Treehouse): The sleeve says "from the forthcoming 'Last Pagan's Record - Ever,'" which we hope isn't true, Pagans records are always such gritty fun. Some people are clean freaks, who change their clothes if they get so much as a spot, but like pigs and wrestlers in the mud, the Pagans frolic in the muck and the slime with a glee and hilarity lost on most pop fans and bands these days. Pagans play rock 'n' roll. They did then (late 70's), they do now. You should hear this grubby version of "Heart of Stone" on the b-side (live from 7th St. Entry in Minneapolis), with the kind of filth and soil that's been missing from the Stones for 20 years! No more neat and tidy bundles, no more Mr. nice guy, this is the genuine spirit, all smiles and attitude. A-side is a more restrained pop ditty, as if they were making themselves more presentable for a keg party, but still has a sufficient kick to it. From the early days of punk to their continual comebacks, the Pagans have always rocked, and this is no exception! (Box 80037, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

THE POLANSKYS—"The Ballad of JOHN PARKER" 7" (Singles Only Label/Dutch East): A topical folk song about one of those increasing rarities: the modern hero. Most of our celebrities, politicians, and public figures are more contemptible than heroic (Donald and Ivanna anyone?), but the little known Parker is worthy of a ballad. Parker, an ex-addict, goes around Northeast cities giving out clean needles to junkies (exchanging them for used ones), in a compassionate effort to help slow the spread of AIDS among the most likely group to contract the disease. For his efforts, he is normally arrested for possession of hypodermics, which is an outrage. The politicians (even DAVID DINKINS who is becoming Mayor Stinkins if you ask me) say they cannot condone or in any way legitimize such drug abuse by distributing the needles, one guesses they prefer their addicts dead (as well as the more innocent people they might inflict sexually) to safe. Pretty callous. As I write, Parker and his group of 50 "AIDS Brigade" volunteers were arrested yesterday three blocks from my house for their activities (the Post article failed to mention Parker's name or "AIDS Brigade," typical responsible reporting). The fact is that the outlawing of needles actually encourages the spread of the deadly disease; it does not address the addiction itself, but merely makes the needles harder to come by; junkies are thus more likely to share dirty needles. If you'd like to donate to Mr. Parker, who pays for the needles out of his own part-time job as a fisherman, write or call at P.O. Box 201, 492 E. Broadway, Boston, MA 02127, (617) 269-8236. Polanskys' (STEVE DANSIGER, ex-PIANASAURAS and WILL DIAL) peppy folk manages to capture the essence of Parker, with lines like "prejudice and silence are the curse," and "The inaction and silence is absurd." The sleeve's NY Times article on Parker does the rest. Proceeds go to the AIDS Brigade. This is serious, folks. (611 Broadway, Suite 616, NYC 10012)

THE POPINJAYS—"Don't Go Back" 12" (Big Cat UK): Mark Burgess mentioned these folks, WENDY ROBINSON and POLLY HANCOCK in our interview, so you know

they're worth checking out, right? Sure enough, this is really sweet stuff, fluffy feather-bed and childhood dreams music. The female vocals are like an invitation to come play, coming as they are from within the secure and friendly environment of the lightly plucked guitars and what sounds like a gay flute. Lyrics are sensual and interesting, heart-beating, mad nuerotica "Like a million bursting love affairs/Calling my name then throw me down the stairs." "So Close" shows there's more than just the beddie-bye a-side to them, with louder yet still vastly understated guitar and more prominent snare beat. Then on to "Move to Perish," they're back to rocking us gently and whispering sweet nothings in our ear. As lovely and as calm as one can get from a pair of speakers in a crazy urban apartment. Morrissey may have lost his faith in womanhood a while back, but someone ought to slip him a copy of this, he'll get it back fast. This is gorgeous stuff that makes you swoon instead of gag. Such splendor is true luxury. (PO Box 59, London, N22 4NS)

PORCELAIN BOYS—"If You Were Real" EP 7" (THD): (This review originally appeared in Rockpool) They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. If so, The Descendants/All should be entirely pleased that Minnesota's Porcelain Boys like them so much. Thought for a second this was Milo and/or his ex-mates under an assumed name! Of course, it could be mere accident, anything is possible, but the similarity here is so striking, it seems implausible! But that's OK, they're likeable, with spry, energetic, coughing guitars and overly earnest lyrics/vocals from drummer (let's hear it for singing drummers!) ERIK KALSER. The band is hefty sounding, and the attitude is there, we can expect them to improve and grow into their own sound. Enjoyable for a debut (POB 13136, Mnpls, MN 55414)

THE PRICE—"The Price You Pay" (So What UK): Debut 45 from English outfit that specializes in blending ska/reggae and punk/pop in the way that Members, Ruts, Neurotics, later SLF and others have done before. Both these tracks are pretty good, but since 2 other songs on Underground Rockers Vol. 2 are better, and a new single has already appeared on Mixed Emotions UK produced by old RUTS' guitarist PAUL FOX (not related to the Paul Fox who produced the last XTC LP), better to look for that instead. The label who put this out is actually one of the best fanzines in England. You should write them to get their new issue, with a well informed, loving and very long T.V. SMITH interview! Write to: 26 Pinn Close, Cowley Peachey, NR. Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 3TB, UK)

PRIMAL SCREAM—"Ivy Ivy Ivy," "Loaded" (Creation UK): As for "Ivy," I agree with Tim Broun's review of the LP last issue, it seems the Byrds-maniacs have converted to a mix of Beach Boys (I'd say circa Beach Boys Today) and Thunders' Heartbreakers (or Chuck Berry). Really good! 100% different, "Loaded" is no paean to Velvet Underground, it sounds more like a followup to Stone Roses' "Fools Gold," with a similar (if slower and more indolent) neo-funk scuffle. Like "Fools Gold," lyrics are kept to the minimum, the groove's the thing. Good on a dancefloor, nice to hear at home on occasion, but really no big deal. The intro and outro tape of some guy from what sounds like a 50's teen flick saying he "wants to get loaded, go out and have a good time" is amusing enough. B-side of "I'm Losing More Than I'll Ever Have" is BOBBY GILLESPIE returning to crooning, maybe this sounds like the

Velvets, the way the guitars are in no hurry, until all of a sudden, at the ending it converts to a stax soul ending, which is the best part of the song! A strange single, anyway you look at it. (8 Westgate St., London E8 3RN UK)

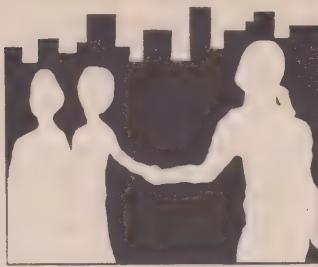
PSYCHEDELIC FURS "House" (CBS UK): Best choice for the single, still can't see why this was put so late on side 2 of the LP! The LP version is far better though, as this remix by guitarist **JON ASHTON** and **LAURENCE DIANA** strips the song of a lot of its immediacy in the desire for more atmosphere, so they end up with a prettier but less exciting mix. Ah well, it's a brilliant song anyway, from what was the comeback LP of '89, one of those rare stories of a formerly great band going back to their roots, as the last LPs by Comsat Angels and 999 did after far lesser works. B-side "Watchtower" would have been one of the other best songs on the LP, can't see how they could leave this off and ignore it live! With a petrified keyboard hovering over the choruses of **RICHARD BUTLER** saying "bye, goodbye," a pumping, unyielding 2/4 beat, and curving guitars, this is one of their best. The pain of instant separation hits home big time! Get this b-side!

RED HERRING-STIFFY (Elixir): Philadelphia has more than cheap-shot artist Hockey teams (I hate the Flyers!). Never heard of this guys before, but once in a while you get such records and they actually prove worth your time to play them! Red Herring, whose logo suspiciously resembles that of the English Red Flame label (now defunct?), is a pretty rockin' quartet with big thumping drums and buzzing guitars, and plaintive yet forceful melodies. Each song just keeps banging at you without letup, just beat beat beat, and those rude guitars underneath. "Monster" manages a nice harmony on the chorus, with a fun surf-pop bridge. Overall, this is more listenable power-pop than this genre usually gives us. Solid, well thought out, pretty good. (1023 Spruce St. #5, Philadelphia, PA 19107)

RED TEMPLE SPIRITS "New Land" 7" (Independent Projects): (This review appeared in Rockpool) Independent Projects, along with cousins Nate Starkman & Son, are known for their unbelievable sleeve artwork (the finest anywhere) and uncompromising, unusual ethereal music. Among their most prized items is this new, limited edition 7" of Red Temple Spirits, far better than their fine but flawed Dancing to Restore an Eclipsed Moon. Both sides will particularly arouse Savage Republic fans, with it's guitar textural beauty. Sleeve is a knockout, the usual hand-pressed careful artistry that says "this is not just product, dammit." A total package of wonder to enthrall! As usual! (544 Mateo, LA, CA, 90013)

RHYTHM COLLISION "Pictures on My Wall" 7" EP (Collision): This band probably takes their name from the 4th Ruts (then Ruts D.C.) LP, and the back sleeve is a collage of records, buttons, posters, etc. of SLF, Stranglers, Vibrators, Jam, 999, Clash, X-Ray Spex, Damned, Buzzcocks, Lurkers, Pistols, Cortinas, Chelsea, Adverts. Obviously a polka band, right? You know expectations run high with this kind of heritage on parade (though suspicions sneak in when you consider this trio is from the L.A. area, one of the hotbeds of '77 punk, and no U.S. bands make their sleeve. What no Avengers, Weirdos, Dils? What gives?), but Rhythm Collision can't fulfill them. Not that they're bad, they're pretty good if you like rudimentary old punk, and certainly I do. Just these guys need to develop their own

The Ballad of John Parker



POLANSKYS 45



PRIMAL SCREAM 45

style, this poorly recorded (a rare botch by producer **RICHARD ANDREWS** who does the All stuff and more) punk is too by the basics, and not enough of their own personality. "Pictures on My Wall" (not a cover of Echo and The Bunnymen's '79 debut 45) and "Didn't Know" are good enough to make you think they'll get there someday. At least they have riffs and the desire to write classic songs, this is no crap thrash. But with the exception of the mediocre Lurkers, they have a long way to go before they can be compared favorably with their good taste in heroes, if London is still calling. (28951 Marlies St., Agoura Hills, CA, 91301)

ROCKPHONICS-GET THE PICTURE (Incas): A decent local band! From Yonkers to be exact. Production is professional, nice mixture of electric lead and acoustic rhythm, respectable songs, intricately arranged guitar pop (minor vocal rockabilly influences), tempting energy. Sometimes the singing is a little overdone, but it's never theatrical, just **TOM CONTE** tries too hard sometimes, it's OK to relax a little. And they could put some more dirt in their sound, the overall effect borders on slick. But it's a pretty good first outing nevertheless! They obviously put a lot of time into the music, and it shows. (POB 805, Hoboken, NJ 07030-0805)

SAINTS and MOCK TURTLES 7" (Free With Bucketfull of Brains Mag): From the issue with Saints' **CHRIS BAILEY** on the cover, and great interviews/discography of them and Mock Turtles. Saints' "I Dreamed of Marie Antoinette" is just a demo sounding recording, with just bongos and what might be wood block for percussion, yet it makes ample use of those one of a kind Saints' strings (as was found so often on '84's A Little Madness to Be Free), and Bailey's usual vocal prowess. This is him singing in his more relaxed mode, just his very strong voice almost humming to himself. Really pretty, really nice. For just a piece of fun, it's actually better than much of the last LP Prodigal Son, since it's under-produced instead of over. Mock Turtles' "Croppies Lie Down" is not one of their better tracks, a 6/8 timed waltz with country fiddle. Nice to see them try something a little out of the routine, but their songs and performances have been far stronger, and far more distinctive on their own records. (Look for the debut LP, out by the time you read this) But, considering you get a very good magazine free with the record (I know we're supposed to think of it as the other way around, but if they insist on releasing unknown Saints songs, we can't help it), which also has interviews with **GRANT HART** and **BARRACUDAS**, get it!

THE SHAMS "Only a Dream" 7" (Singles Only Label/Dutch East): Wonderful little single. Three women with

happy, nice voices who harmonize so sweetly, they're the epitome of Everly Brothers-like innocence. In fact, they're almost too naive, they show touches of being corny which detracts (especially when they talk instead of sing in the bridge of the b-side "Only 3 AM," bad move). But nothing could really spoil the earnest lightness of being in this one guitar/3 voices gentle folk/country trio. Lyrically interesting too; a side is the flip side of desire, while b-side is a mature, knowing assessment of motherhood and marriage, a lament on the loss of free time and independence in sacrifice, something most young people assume they can handle until it's demanded of them permanently (particularly in the form of a helpless baby). The operative line: "And I just want to smoke and drink/And stay out late with men again." Touching stuff, and with references to hubby on the road, autobiographical; main songwriter **AMY RIGBY** is married to **WILL RIGBY** and they do indeed have a kid. (611 Broadway, Suite 616, NY, NY, 10012)

SINK-ANOTHER LOVE TRIANGLE (Decoy UK): (This review originally appeared in Rockpool) Ipswich, England is hardly Liverpool, but their Sink seem as enamored with American punk and hardcore, specifically the Dischord sound, as The Beatles were with American r'n'b, rock 'n' roll and rockabilly! Funny then, that it's Sink who puts a photo of Sun Records Studios in Memphis on the back of their sleeve, and that they do a credible version of **BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD**'s big mid-60's hit "For What It's Worth" (**STEVEN STILLS** would like this)! On their 1st LP, this trio sounds like they're a product of D.C.'s Inner Ear studios instead of Sun or Chess, with controlled, quick, but-not thrash tempoed hardcore rockers like "On the Tracks." Various D.C. types are even thanked on the inner sleeve (Bert Queiroz, Michael Hampton, Shudder to Think). But, this aside, they're tight, hard, lean, and not so green, possessing the ability to go from a scorch to a polite acoustic number (like Scream's Banging the Drum) back to another jet of gas. Pretty good stuff, same label as Mega City 4 too (231 Portobello Rd., London W11 1LT UK)

THE SLAVES-THE SLAVES (I.R.S.): Remember that old saying "What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?" Here's a case of "What's an unbelievable singer like you doing in a mediocre band like this? The singer is **RIK L. RIK**, one of the best voices in punk history. Who can forget his work with **NEGATIVE TREND** on that great late 70's punk compilation Tooth and Nail like "Mercenaries?" Or the Beach Blvd. comp. follow-up cuts? Or the live LP by his previous hot band F-WORD Like it Or Not Live? Or even his lesser known yet equally overwhelming '82 solo single "Dominique" b/w "Soul Power?" Maybe the saddest thing is that both sides of that single are re-recorded here, why why why? It's a pity to hear such exquisite material done such a disservice, and those are the two best things here! The Slaves are a completely run of the mill rock band, the sort every sterile "classic rock" station in the country feasts on, tired, un-demanding, uninteresting, melodramatic, indulgent hard rock, that pretends a link to honest rock 'n' roll of the past, but merely perpetuates the phony substitute that obliterated that tradition (note the cover of **JOY DIVISION**'s "Transmission" done as a neo-metal track, and a tribute to the great **NICO** that's really pretty good, "Song For Nico 1938-1988"). All these years we waited, hoped for Rik to return, thinking he'd never let us down. Duped again I guess! **NOTE:** Good to see he's at least still going it barefoot.

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SLOPPY SECONDS-"**I Don't Wanna Be a Homosexual**" 7" (**Toxic Shock**): (This review originally appeared in Rockpool) The words of the song are mildly disturbing (the lyrics go out of their way to say they have nothing against homosexuals, but the singer seems vexed to be mistaken for one), but the music is good time downstroke zippunk that the early Ramones and Gen X perfected, always good to hear modern evidence that it's not a forgotten style, yet again! The a-side can also be found on the new LP, but the flip is found here only. Wouldn't ya know it, on "Human Waste" they go funny-folk/country (like the Replacements 1st b-side, "If Only You Were Lonely") just like 13111! "You all know what we are/ The throwbacks to retards," they harangue with tongue in cheek. They're not the first to realize that humans are idiotic drones, but this is amusing as hell. (POB 43787, Tucson, AZ 85733)

THE SNIVELING SHITS-I CAN'T COME (Damaged Goods UK): Who are Sniveling Shits and why does their lone 45 "Terminal Stupid" b/w "I Can't Come," (both included here) from 13 years ago, fetch 30-60 bucks? Yes that was the punk era and these guys sound like pretty tough rockers from the good ol' days, but this was no typical group of teenagers on the dole freed from boredom by the punk explosion. Rather, this was a bunch of journalists from England's Music Press, like Zig Zag's **GIOVANNI DADOMO** (vocals) and one of the best Sounds' writers ever, **PETE MAKOWSKI** (guitar), as well as VIBRATORS guy **JOHN ELLIS**, later MEMBERS drummer **ADE LILYWHITE** and his more famous producer brother **STEVE LILYWHITE** on bass. I.E. this unit existed to have fun and take the piss out of rock 'n' roll and punk in particular, and few such fuck-off side bands this side of Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias have been this clever, this silly, this irreverent. The only pity is that side 2 should be side 1; "Bring Me The Head of Yukio Mishima" blasts pretty well, "Terminal Stupid" cooks and the best and most important Shits' track, "isgodaman" ends the LP. This song was originally released on the Streets compilation in 1978, with the band listed as "**AUTHUR'S COMICS**" instead of Sniveling Shits; someone must have made a stink (no double meaning intended) about the name. This is among the best (and most hysterical/ blasphemous) songs about Him ever ("does He get up in the morning and go for a piss/Does He shave and strap a digital watch on His wrist" etc.), a great twist on that old idea that man was created in God's image, one that most Catholics or Jews with a sense of humor would be laughing uproariously at if they weren't so damn touchy about their idols/icons (see: Last Temptation of Christ, protests). Side one is neither as good nor as funny. Like Half Man Half Biscuit after them, the humor of "Waiting For My Crossroads" is too English to be understood here, though it's amusing to hear VELVET UNDERGROUND's "Waiting For My Man" covered with different lyrics (about the TV show Crossroads). And "I Wanna Be Your Biro" puts a spin on Iggy's "Cock in my Pocket" with Dadamo fantasizing he's the biro (UK for pocket pen) in the breast pocket of the girl he fancies. Well anyway, get ready for a lot of smart, goofy nuttiness and garage rock, and play "isgodaman" 1000 times for everyone you know. **NOTE:** Heard "isgodaman" once on **MARTY BYK**'s WSOU show in '79, couldn't believe he had the guts to play that on the radio! Words like "Does He go for girls with bite/Or does He have to jerk himself to sleep every night." To quote Phil Rizzuto, "Holy Cow!" (PO Box 671, London E17 6NF, UK)

SNUFF-SNUFFSAIDBUTGORBLIMEYGUVESTONEMEIFHEDIDN'TTHROWAWOBBLERCHACHACHAYOU'REGOINGHOMEINACOSMICCAMBIENE

(Worker's Playtime UK): Like Senseless Things, there are two Snuffs. Both have a great punk side; The other 1/2 of Senseless Things is hardcore, while the other 1/2 of Snuff is thrash! Weird. On the punk stuff, they're a thick, riffing, roaring, buzzing, crunching attack, somewhere between The Drones LP, 1st album Toxic Reasons, UK Subs' Endangered Species, Moving Targets and early Effigies if you need references. I.E., unlike Mega City Four and Senseless Things, their roots aren't pop and punk-pop, and they don't write subtly about rejection, romance, and other relationships, they just pound it out with an old punk sociopolitical stance. In fact, the inner sleeve largely resembles the Zounds LP! The thrash stuff ("Now You Don't Remember," "Too Late," "Another Girl," and their simple-minded version of "I Think We're Alone Now," which reminds of 7 Seconds' "99 Red Balloons" only not as good) they're competent at, but this stuff is as old as Bob Hope, and they're no Bad Religion. But the punk 1/2 is excellent, and they already have a new record out. Note: their album titles aren't long enough. Only one word! Gorblimey!

THE SPRINGFIELDS-"Sunflower" 7"(Bus Stop): Springfields are the side band of Chicago group CHOO CHOO TRAIN, and this is pretty 60'sesque pop. A side is as dreamy and satisfying as a mid-afternoon nap in the park. Reminds a bit of Rain Parade only less psychedelic. Three points for b-side cover of THE HOLLIES' "Clown" from their '66 5th LP For Certain Because (Released in U.S. as Stop Stop Stop), one of those GRAHAM NASH lead vocal efforts that always stops you dead in your tracks. Springfields' RIC MENCK is no Nash, and in fact, his vocal is a little off-kilter for such a sad number about grief overtaking the public persona, but still the lighter, livelier approach gives this new life yet again. And is this label named after the blockbuster '66 Hollies hit? We must know. Great taste never goes out of style. (PO Box 3161, Iowa City, IO 52244-3161, also available from U.K. on Sarah label)

SUGARCUBES-"Planet" (One Little Indian UK): The least impressive Sugarcubes single so far. It can't compare with their two best "Birthday" and "Regina," it's more like "Deus" and "Coldsweat," only not as good, that is, it's more subdued and its groove is less compelling. Many fans seem disappointed with the new 2nd LP this is taken from, and many blame EINER, but he's not at fault on this one, in fact he barely sings at all, and his contributions don't distract. And it's certainly not the golden voiced BJORK's problem, 'cause her voice is still a thing of beauty. No, the shortcoming is the songwriting, the same problem that ruined their otherwise sensational debut LP. Get past the great singles, and the occasional other brilliant song like "Motorcrash," and they're all texture and no hook, something not even a tight and inventive band like this with such an untouchable singer can overcome. The strings laden b-side version of "Planet" called "Somersault" is even prettier, but no better, it's still the same half-fast song, it's only slightly catchy (the chord change from verse to chorus is nice). We need more than this. (250 York Rd., London SW11 3SJ, UK)

TEARDROP EXPLODES-"Serious Danger" (Fontana/Polygram UK): Everybody Wants to Shag The Teardrop Exploses was the proposed title of the first LP Kilimanjaro, but since "shag" is Brit for "fuck" the record company Mercury wouldn't allow it then. So now,

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8 years after they split up, an LP is released under that name, though it turns out to be the long lost scrapped 3rd LP followup to Wilder. Unfortunately, some of those tracks already appeared on the double single version of the '82 farewell "You Disappear From View," so there's no hurry to get the LP just yet, let's try the single: The a-side sounds like a more dance version of "Ha Ha I'm Drowning" minus the pivotal horns (too bad) and with a less special melody. Still good though, with a vintage JULIAN COPE sultry vocal performance. The bad news: The B-side is the Kilimanjaro version of the first single "Sleeping Gas," which is a waste. Have they no old live recordings, anything? Even the extra track on the 12" is a Wilder track! And the a-side is on the new release, this single is waste waste waste. One realizes Teardrop Exploses are no longer around to record b-sides for us, but what purpose does this serve? Get the LP, skip this.

TENDER FURY-GARDEN OF EVIL (XXX): Rik L. Rik is not the only old, great punk singer (see Slaves LP review) playing in a garden-variety wank rock band these days. Former original T.S.O.L. singer JACK GRISHAM never had a great voice (like Rik), but he did great things with it, showing once again that attitude, style, timing, melodic sense and real communicative energy can still make great vocalists. But they need good music to sing over, and Tender Fury's 2nd LP is as bad as the first. Produced by ex-Iggy Pop drummer and current TIN MACHINE guy HUNT SALES (son of the lovable Soupy Sales), these 11 songs are boring FM rock personified. The fact that Grisham did a bang-up job fronting the briefly reunited original TSOL in December, and that the one time I saw Tender Fury a few years ago they were good to great makes their recordings twice as lamentable (but here Jack is following a pattern). His last band, CATHEDRAL OF TEARS made a terrific demo and played great live shows, but released an appalling EP!. In a way it's funny, 'cause Jack is one of the great characters of rock, and you know he really doesn't give a fuck, so you just have to put this on and laugh, but on the other hand, it's also a waste of some genuine talent. NOTE: Jack's old T.S.O.L. drummer TODD BARNES is no longer in Tender Fury, replaced by DINO GUERRERO in time for this LP. (6715 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 284, Hollywood, CA 90028-4604)

THAT PETROL EMOTION-"Abandon" (Virgin UK): That Petrol Emotion are back, with a 4th LP out produced by R.E.M. producer SCOTT LITT. Will get that soon, in the meantime here's the first single from it. The 3rd LP was somewhat of a disappointment, and though this evidence is inconclusive, it's easy to believe they may be back on track as well. Tempering their funkier side a bit and slowing the

SHAMS debut 45

TEARDROP EXPLODES 45



tempo into a more slow power skank has picked up their effectiveness right away, and this sucker plows into you at the end. Still not a complete return to the heights of Manic Pop Thrill's greater moments, but very solid nevertheless. B-side of "Fat Mouth Creed" finds them returning to fast pop music not far removed from early UNDERTONES (funny since with the departure of brother JOHN, DAMIEN O'NEILL is now the only ex-Undertone), only with the Petrol's recognizable guitars. Quick and over in a flurry, it's exciting enough to merit purchase of the 7" to obtain this track.

THE THING-THE THING (Contempo ITALY): (this review appeared in Rockpool) As with the Libertines, Defoliants, Clay Idols, and others, it's a shame the way the indie scene is when U.S. bands have to put records out on European labels (where they do well) to get them out at all! The latest example is New York's Thing, who've just released their debut LP in Italy. Like the movie of the same name, their music is a horror show, a dark, infernal racket, in the New York Noise tradition. I admit this sort of stuff isn't really my cup of tea, but I respect it nevertheless, it's firmly rooted in atonal and anti-music post-punk, from Pop Group and Fall or No Trend, with a particularly distinctive, evil guitar. If this is your idea of a fun time, you sicko you, check this out. Start with "The Hitcher," which'll make your skin crawl. (PO Box 1369, Firenze 50122 Italy)

THIRTEEN ONE ELEVEN-My Bible Is The Latest T.V. Guide 12" (Dog Gone): This is a real hoot. 13-1-11 is one STASHUS MUTE. Never heard of him? That's 'cause it's really a pseudonym for one BILL BERRY, drummer supreme for one R.E.M. of Athens, GA making a record for Dog Gone, a good natured label run by REM's manager JEFFERSON HOLT. The a-side is a real knee-slapper, a George Jones' style number that may be the hick country equivalent of Black Flag's "TV Party": "Drinking beers and flipin' stations/It's my favorite recreation/ Watching Beaver Cleaver, Mash and Gomer Pyle." Several other shows are mentioned (he's got cable!) and he buys videos too. Doesn't this sound like a lot of people you know? The creditors are coming to re-possess everything ("I Can't hold a job/I'm becoming quite a slob"), but at least he's got his "hockey, football, golf and Twilight Zone." The banjo and lapsteel give the song an authentic sound, you'd never know this wasn't some Grand Ole Opry classic! Bravo! B-side is a short 60's cover of "Things I'd Like to Say," a light, breathy acoustic dipped number with Berry (sorry, Mute) doing a nice vocal like David Crosby might. For a side project, this is quality. Is 13111 his address like Grant Hart's EP or something? (POB 1742, Athens, GA 30603)

THIS PICTURE-"Naked Rain" 12" (Rough Trade UK): Due to past good service, we try to check out anything Rough Trade in England signs. Usually, even their worst stuff isn't that bad. This is that bad. In fact, it's awful. The song is OK like U2's "Two Hearts Beat as One" dance pop, but the production is faceless, and worst, the singer is a Bono clone (through all three songs) with a strong resemblance of Gene Loves Jezebel thrown in for good measure. The music lacks any life whatsoever. Everything is heavy and over-dramatic like your worst Silent Running nightmares. Appearing at sell piles near you. Total Crap.

THREE HITS-FIRE IN THE HOUSE (Aquablue): One of the nicer surprises of the issue, in that I'd never

heard a scrap about this band or their pretty solid album. Melancholy, lovely, lively, lilly-white, wistful, wonder-pop is flowing on tap, with one of the more gifted female vocalists we've encountered these days, SHEILA VALENTINE. The title track and the equally drifting "Lori" are like little sensations, someone stroking your fingers. One criticism is that this might have made a better EP; a few tracks are on the unspectacular side, particularly on side 2, but for the careful, sensuous guitars, sweet vocals and overall lightheaded approach, this is a very pleasant and unexpected record. "Say Goodbye," a lullabye waltz is particularly lulling! Night-time music. (165 3rd St., Suite 6, Hoboken, NJ 07030)

THE WALKABOUTS-CATARACT (Sub-Pop): Sub-Pop puts out a basic guitar pop record with no hint of grunge rock 70s-isms! CARLA TORGESON needs a lot of work on the vocals, her voice sounds flat even when she's in pitch, and her style comes off as forced. Fortunately CHRIS ECKMAN sings too, and both are imaginative guitar players, strumming here, sustaining here, pushing here, backing off there. They're developed and aspiring enough to spice up the guitar sound with colors, of tender piano, of cello + violin (CAMPER VON BEETHOVEN's JONATHAN SEGAL), and tasteful harmonica, all of which fills out the sound nicely. There's attention to pacing (4/4 rock, waltzes, skip-beats) and tempo changes, and best of all, the production balances everything nicely. With better vocals, this would have been a great record. But it's at least an OK one, and a surprise from a label that doesn't deal in delicate music that often. (POB 20645, Seattle, WA, 98102)

WEDDING PRESENT-"Brassneck" 7" (RCA UK): (This review originally appeared in Rockpool) Any of you heard the unlikely, perverse pairing of Wedding Present and producer STEVE ALBINI? What, are Wedding Present big fans of BIG BLACK or something? The 7" of "Brassneck" (the 12" is a full EP, I believe) proves that as bizarre as this matchup of the ex-indie pop kings and Captain Crunch is, it's just the kick in the ass this band needed to get out of the rut they've been in at least since the followup to "My Favorite Dress" (which briefly changed the formula only for them to return to it immediately). Comparing this to the original version of "Brassneck" that leads off Bizarro, Albini has completely revamped the sound, giving them a danger they've not previously exhibited. Now, when DAVID GEDGE sings "There I said it," he sounds more bitter and hateful than self-doubting. The flip of "Don't Talk, Just Kiss" is even more breakneck; As is Albini's wont, you have to go deep into the now scraping guitars to find Gedge, and for the first time, the drums are up and in your face. Overall the sound is abrasive and as overloaded as a good Dinosaur Jr. track. Credit Wedding Present for going out on a limb, and Albini for delivering.

WILD FLOWERS-TALES LIKE THESE (Slash/WEA): Ugh. This is still not going to make one forget those great first 2 LPs, The Joy of it All or Dust, and it's hard to believe this is the same band that once gave us great singles like "Melt Like Ice," "Things Have Changed," "It Ain't So Easy" and "A Kind of Kingdom." Unlike '87's innocuous Sometime Soon, the guitars, oft-compared to Echo and Teardrop Explodes, are back, but what's still missing is the production values and songwriting of the older stuff. MATT WALLACE, who also did a dissatisfying job with the most recent Replacements' LP, makes them sound impotent, self-important and as blustery

as last album, way too tailored for the American bland airwaves, the more business-as-usual acceptable face of watered down "post-modern" playlists. Frankly, this is limp city.

WISHNIAKS-CATCH 33 (Blood Money/Skyclad): Hard rockin' rootsy pop is a tad overdone these days, but then again, these guys can also put up a decent wall of sound with the now standard jangling and chiming guitars. The band is competent and forceful, songs like "Day To End All Days" (2 other notable tracks: The Rolling Stones' "Chestnut Park" and a SCIENTISTS' cover, "Frantic Romantic") are crisp, sharply written and in places great. They get a bit samey over the course of a 13 song album; a change-up is needed (and a curveball!) from their benchmark sound, but despite the lack of imagination (and the overly twangy vocals which often sound affected!), the group's strong-arm sound and stalwart songs keep them from falling off the edge into the abyss of the "dime a dozen" doing this stuff. (POB 30084, Philadelphia, PA 19103)

YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS-THIS ONE'S FOR THE LADIES (Frontier): Anyone who does a faithful, empathetic cover of THE KINKS' "Picture Book" ('68's The Kinks Are The Village Green Preservation Society, one of the all-time greats) gets an enthusiastic thumbs up, and the other 15 songs are good too! Two oddities: "Taco Wagon" is a send up of "Cool Jerk," while the vocals on "Lost Track of Time" are a (intended?) Squeeze imitation! The Fellows are a guitar band with a love of pretty pop and a light-handed lyrical approach (just west of silly). Like The Monkees, they're too busy trying to have some goofy fun to make serious work of what they enjoy. This they telegraph from the opening mockery of 60's girl group tunes, with one cherub answering a "Do you miss him when he's gone?" inquiry with a disinterested, careless "no." Independent of the frivolity, there's some truly great songs, so they've a semblance of aspiration: "Still There's Hope" followed by "Carrothead," "Middle Man of Time," and "Wishing Ring" will fit on any tape of favorite melodies you might make. You just can't help liking this record; Guess that means I ought to go back and investigate their older LPs! (POBox 22, Sun Valley, CA, 91353)

THE BEST OF RODNEY ON THE ROQ (Posh Boy): An excellent synthesis of the three Rodney on The ROQ compilation LPs. There are a few glaring omissions, notably Black Flag ("Rise Above") and Minutemen's back to back contributions from Vol. 2 (or Black Flag's from Vol. 1 + Shattered Faith), though in selecting the tracks, Rodney and Posh Boy may have leaned towards recordings that are either unavailable or difficult now to find. This is one of the best comps. of early 80's Southern California punk, since RODNEY BINGENHEIMER has been bringing L.A. that sort of music on KROQ before even the '76/'77 punk explosion. Of course, there are other styles to keep it varied, like HENRY DILTZ' Beach Boys like pop (a PHIL SPECTOR/HARRY NILSSON cover), BANGLES surf cover of "Bitchen Summer" and NINA HAGEN's (I guess) intentionally awful cover of THE MONKEES' "I'm a Believer." But the bulk is those loud guitars, zippy melodies, attitude and banging rock 'n' roll punk from that old '80-'83 days. You get exclusives too, like the original version of ADOLESCENTS' "Amoeba" which blows away the later LP version, and the 2nd version of AGENT ORANGE's classic "Bloodstains," way better than the original rare single and more aggressive than the good later LP version. Likewise, CIRCLE JERKS' original look



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at GARLAND JEFFRIES' "Wild in the Streets" makes mincemeat of the later 2nd LP title track. If you never heard the original RED CROSS EP, you'll be stunned by the punk blast (no psychedelia here folks) of "Annette's Got The Hits," which guitarist GREG HETSON appropriated for "Live Fast Die Young" when he moved over to form Circle Jerks (stealing from yourself is OK). The original version of SOCIAL DISTORTION's "1945" is grungy and inferior to the later single, but will interest Social D. fans in its raw-ness. You get a track from RED ROCKERS' debut Clash inspired punk LP Condition Red "Dead Heroes" before they decided to stink badly (what an odor), DRAMARAMA does too faithful a job covering NEW YORK DOLLS's "Private World" (though it's a good choice), J.F.A. ("Preppy") and VANDALS (novelty hit "Urban Struggle") are funny, CALAMITES cover THE WHO's "The Kids Are Alright" (though these girls changed the gender to "dancing with my guy" which blows the rhyme of "girl" and "well," sounds dopey!), and CH3, THE CROWD and TSOL come crashing in with two of their more breakneck early numbers, "You Make Me Feel Cheap," "Modern Machine" and "Abolish Govt./Silent Majority." There's enough stellar cuts here to get your money's worth (26, of which 2/3 - 3/4 are good to incredible), and the endless liner notes are also a bonus. Hail Rodney! (PO Box 4474, Palm Desert, CA 92261-4474)

LIVE AT THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE (Divide): The Divide is a fun bar with free admission. Though nothing could match the old Max's atmosphere and sound, the old Max's crowd hangs out here to relive their glories and play rock 'n' roll without anything but the vocals being miked (how'd they record this LP?). Accordingly, the WALDOS track is the best thing here; since JOHNNY THUNDERS just isn't Johnny anymore, it's good that WALTER LURE and mates are keeping up that 4/4 smacking blessedless with "Damn Your Soul." They deserve a whole LP, sure, record it here, they play here 4 times a month anyway! Nothing else is in their class, though the SENDERS old guitar rock/r'n'b is always confident and fun, and THE RAUNCH HANDS, ALTER BOYS and maybe SURREAL MOOCS are all OK, and THE DRAGSTERS' surf is fun. The other 6 bands are skippable! If you see this cheap, get it for the Waldos track! (POB 1557, NYC 10009)

ROIR 10TH ANNIVERSARY (Cassette Only, ROIR): (this review originally appeared in Rockpool) ROIR is the definition of indie, thriving by going where the majors won't, with cassette only releases that often feature otherwise unavailable recordings by popular bands. Take their new 10th anniversary compilation of the best of their 67 non reggae/ska releases. It's tastefully compiled by Trouser Press editor Ira Robbins, with a star packed lineup that befits ROIR's catalog. Just the live cuts alone

by BUZZCOCKS ("Ever Fallen in Love"), DICKIES ("Manny Moe and Jack"), BAD BRAINS ("Pay to Cum"), TELEVISION ("Venus"), DURRUTI COLUMN ("Elevator Sequence"), FLIPPER ("Way of the World"), U.K. SUBS ("SK8 Tough," thanks for the mention Ira), GLENN BRANCA ("Movement 1") and even older-timers? AND THE MYSTERIANS ("96 Tears"), NICO (VELVETS' "All Tomorrow's Parties") and MCS ("Tonight") make this a definitive live sampler few could match! Add studio oddities by other notables like MEKONS, DICTATORS, and 3 JOHNS and this is truly can't miss. Only complaints might be the inclusion of completely asinine G.G. ALLIN and the childish GERMS (first gig, before they were a power) over, say N.Y. Dolls or the essential punk sampler N.Y. Thrash (Kraut, Beastie Boys, Undead, Mad, Even Worse, etc.), and a dub track or two (a ROIR specialty) like Ruts D.C. wouldn't've hurt. But that's nitpicking. A tape to be proud of. (611 Broadway, Suite 411, NYC, NY 10012)

STONED AGAIN; A TRIBUTE TO THE ROLLING STONES (Imaginary UK): After going 4 for 4 on these tribute series (the first 4 were for SYD BARRETT, CAPTAIN BEEFHEART, THE KINKS and THE BYRDS), Imaginary finally comes up short. The Stones are a natural subject for this kind of record (modern bands all covering the same old artist), but on the other hand, few of today's bands have their cool swagger, that knowing self-confidence and sexual strut, and many of these bands come off as pale re-workers or worse, uninspired pretenders. Oddly enough, it often seems that the only modern bands who have done the early Stones justice have been the punk bands (as evidenced by the hot LP covers over the years by SOCIAL DISTORTION, CHANNEL 3, THE DEAD BOYS and THE AVENGERS, whose "Paint it Black" was far better even than ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN's!), and the only bands to update the psychedelic Stones have been the goth bands like DANSE SOCIETY and SISTERS OF MERCY. Here even an up and coming band like THE PRUDES, an enlightened new signing for Imaginary, don't seem to know what to do with an old war-horse like "Sympathy For The Devil," their originals are much better! Worse, the stars of the first 4 tributes, MOCK TURTLES are strangely missing when needed most. There are a few decent tracks: INSPIRAL CARPETS' unusually brisk "Gimme Shelter" has the right energy, DR. PHIBES (who?) gives a nicely harsh psychic re-start to "2,000 Light Years From Home" far removed from Danse Society's unearthly disquiet, THE FAMILY CAT do a Wedding Present imitation on "Rocks Off," and the equally obscure 3 IMAGINARY BOYS seem to understand how to put the spring and skitter into "The Last Time" (originally THE REEGS were scheduled to do this track, perhaps they didn't because Imaginary dropped them from their roster). But otherwise, these versions are just OK, (DEATH OF SAMANTHA's "Salt of The Earth," THUNDERBYRDS' "19th Nervous Breakdown," WALTONES' "As Tears Go By"), not very good (SHOP ASSISTANTS' "Respectable," HENRY KAISER BAND's "Tell Me"), or terrible (DAVE KUSWORTH & THE BOUNTY HUNTERS' "Child of the Moon," BOMB PARTY's "Standing in The Shadow," MEMBRANES' "Angie" and WHAT? NOISE's pointless "Under Cover of The Night," who needs the 80's Stones for chrisssakes!). Hopefully the upcoming JIMI HENDRIX tribute If 6 Was 9 will be much better! . (28 Hopwood Avenue, Hopwood, Heywood, Lancs., OL10 2AX, UK)

TERMINAL CITY RICOCHET (Alternative Tentacles): This soundtrack for the film has a pretty interesting lineup, a smorgasbord of veterans of the old '77-'82 Vancouver punk heyday. The best thing is D.O.A.'s version of "Behind The Smile," not to be found on

their recent Murder LP. It's a faster, updated version of an old SUBHUMANS (the better Vancouver Subhumans) song, a little known track that appeared on the Vancouver Independence compilation LP, and later on the repackaging of their classic 1st LP Incorrect Thoughts. This is the 3rd Subhumans song D.O.A. has recorded since Subhumans' singer WIMPY ROY (SUNNY BOY ROY GOBLE) joined on bass, along with "Fuck You" and "No Productivity." They even throw in a bit of ELVIS' "His Latest Flame" in the middle! Great to hear. Speaking of Subhumans, their old bassist GERRY HANNAH, still in jail for the Vancouver 5 political bombings of nuclear weapons plants and other such things, contributes a folk track recorded behind bars called appropriately "Living With The Lies." Along with D.O.A., I, BRAINEATER are the lone survivors of those days, so they update their old standard "Planet X" as "Modern Man" with their usual spacy beat insanity. Even old YOUNG CANADIANS (once THE K-TELS before they were threatened with a suit) and LOS POPULAROS guitarist/leader ART BERGMANN gives us a nifty solo pop track "War Party" (dig that piano!) and recently departed D.O.A. guitarist DAVE GREGG checks in with his dance rock new band THE GROOVAHOLICS' "Pull the Trigger, Sunshine!..". But the real force behind this record is one of the main characters in the film itself, JELLO BIAFRA, who detonates a seething "It's Catching Up" backed by NO MEANS NO, an equally furious "That's Progress" backed by D.O.A. (whose JOEY (SHITHEAD) KEITHLEY is also a main character), and a scary, alarming version of his "Message From Our Sponsor" (from his No More Cocoons LP) underneath some suitably paranoid noodlings from TACKHEAD's KEITH LeBLANC. The only thing missing is a LARD track, but Biafra's in Chicago recording them now! Who needs DEAD KENNEDYS when you have such talented friends? An excellent, varied, active and aware LP that implies the film is not to be missed! More fun than a BUD LUXFORD compilation of Vancouver "fuck" bands! (P.O. Box 11458, S.F., CA 94101)

THE WORLD IN SHREDS VOL. 4 - NEW JERSEY (Shredder): I can remember when "Sex Pistols" graffitied onto the wall of a train bridge near the Maplewood Station, on the Summit to Hoboken Erie-Lackawanna line was the closest thing to punk rock in New Jersey! Now it gets its own 6 band, 6 song compilation from a California label, and it's not half bad either, mostly 'cause they have the sense to include our old friends THE UNDEAD, whose "The Way We Behave" is short but true to BOBBY STEELE's ex-MISFITS band's past. Keep on rockin' in the free world, Bobby. Having hooked us thusly, we soon discover the EP's best track, by Morristown (near Summit! ah, my old home) quartet A PRIORI, who have come far since their OK but flawed EP reviewed here previously. "Too Much To Hope For" is the kind of big guitar solid punk-pop euphoria we're always on the lookout for. Bravo! And the closing track by PARASITES, "Never Giving Up on You" is also notable for it's hooky, cangypunk, with 60's pop lyrics/chorus. Fine boys. SEPARATE PEACE and STICKS AND STONES are OK if nondescript lesser lights, at least they're mid tempo instead of the same ridicu-thrash, if skippable. P.E.D. is an awful stab at Doggy Style/Beasties rap-HC, forget it. But least they admit at the end "the song sucks!" Which fortunately isn't true of the whole EP. (181 Shipley St., S.F., CA 94107)

TIME WILL SHOW THE WISER; THE BUCKETFULL OF BRAINS COLLECTION (Triad/Imaginary UK): Bucketfull of Brains has always put out flexis (now 7" records) free

with their magazines, otherwise unreleased material by known bands. So it's a smart idea to compile them on one 51 Minute long LP. Unfortunately, much of the best such releases are sadly missing, like The Church, The Long Ryders' cover of Flaming Groovies' "I Can't Hide" and R.E.M.'s "Tighten Up," which would have been a great inclusion since it's now such an expensive, rare collector's item. The bands who are on this record range from ex-BYRDS' GENE CLARK's affecting ballad "Gypsy Rider" to a wild, gripping 8 minute monster from Mr. 90's psychedelia himself THE BEVIS FROND, to the moody ghostwalk of THE MOFFS, to an eye-opening original version from 5 years ago by THE CHILLS of a new LP favorite "Oncoming Day," less polished and with louder keyboards by PETER ALLISON. The other 7 cuts are far less exciting. Where it really bogs down is four sleep-inducing side 1 numbers in a row by 11TH DREAM DAY (not their best), THIN WHITE ROPE, the always dreadful GIANT SAND, and even a rare miss-step by MIRACLE LEGION, "30-06." Like most collections, some great, some good (SEERS), some OK (PAUL ROLAND and THE BARRACUDAS) "Very Last Day" which was done far better by THE HOLLIES on their self-titled 3rd LP in '65), some blah. Ain't that always the way? (28 Hopwood Ave., Hopwood, Heywood, Lancs., OL10 2AX, UK)

UNDERGROUND ROCKERS II (Link UK): (this review appeared in Rockpool) Volume II adds 7 more bands to Volume I's good collection of young UK punk bands. Like MEGA CITY 4 and RED LETTER DAY last time, SENSELESS THINGS are the stars with "Busload to Bingo" and "Legal Lies," a thrill for fast guitar pop/punk lovers everywhere. This is a band to contend with! THE PRICE, whose forthcoming single is produced by ex-RUTS/RUTS D.C. guitarist PAUL FOX, are political mod-pop, and H.D.Q. sound like a better G.B.H. with catchy singing instead of tuneless shouting! THE AB'S are nifty hurried fun, and MANIC STREET PREACHERS, the heavy sounding IDENTITY, and SUSPECT DEVICE (X-Ray Spex and SLF fans, no doubt!) are more than competent old time punk. More proof that the 4th (or is it 5th?) wave of UK punk is the purest rock 'n' roll one since the original! (PO Box 164, London, SE13 5QN UK)

Vinyl Solution 7" Sampler (Vinyl Solution UK): Nobody seems to know much about this record, which doesn't even have a picture sleeve or much info, but there it was in the new singles section of the local import store. Sure, we'll buy anything with an unreleased MEGA CITY 4 track on it; even though "No Time" lasts like 30 or 40 seconds long, it's great! Not only their shortest, but their most choleric track! And as with all their releases, 45s, LPs and comps. like this, it's only available here. MC4 are followed by a live cover of BUZZCOCKS's "Something's Gone Wrong Again" (b-side "Harmony in my Head," '79) by France's LES THUGS, who put a raunch into it that the reformed Buzzcocks also inserted into their own extended versions of the song for their US tour a few weeks after this was released. On side 2, HARDONS' "Been Had Before" mixes extended heavy passages like a hardcore MC5 or New Race with their more go-cart thrash. Also good. BOMB DISNEYLAND close with an early demo version of "Faster Bastard," which is nicely manic in the vocals but is otherwise purposeless, devoid of a good riff or a good melody. Worse, it goes on forever, merciless! Oh well 3/4 is a fine percentage. (231 Portobello Rd., London W1 1LT, UK)

NOW FOR A SPECIAL CATEGORY:

REISSUES: RESTLESS RETRO: Restless is cornering the market on punk reissues these days. First there's THE WIPERS' best ever, Youth of America, a deceptive, 6 song choker dominated by the astounding 10 minute title track, one of the heaviest recordings of all time! Then there's 4 LPs by STIFF LITTLE FINGERS: '79's Inflammable Material is one of the top 10 punk albums of all time, a monster. 80's Nobody's Heroes is far inferior but is also great, led by the title track, the classic "Gotta Getaway" and the epic "Tin Soldiers." '81's Go for It is a patchwork LP with greatness matched with the half-fast. A good record, but hasn't lasted well over time. Restless hasn't reissued the 4th (and possibly best) LP, Now Then, here's hoping that they do. Instead, they bring back the shoddy Hanx live LP from '80, which though alright, is a poor record of what was really a prime live group. We also get the first 3 WIRE LPs: '77's Pink Flag is the LP that launched 1000 groups, minimalist yet brainy fuzz-punk that's deservedly revered. You'll know half the songs from all the bands who've covered 'em! '78's Chairs Missing is much the same only more calm and more sinister, possibly the first post-punk LP! "Outdoor Minor" is the much loved single. '79's 154 remains the group's masterpiece, the perfect espousal of art rock, psychedelia, punk and '60's Pink Floyd like mantras. '79's best LP and an album to enthrall forever. "A Touching Display" is awesome! Then there's the two PLUGZ LPs, 2 of the first albums to emerge from the L.A. late 70's punk scene. '79's Electrify Me would turn on fans of first 2 LPs XTC only with a muted Tex-Mex flavor. "You're a space-case, yeahhhhhhhh." Always a favorite. Less hyperactive and far better is '81's Better Luck, one of the great overlooked U.S. guitar-pop albums. CHARLIE QUINTANNA's drumming always mesmerized this reviewer, and TITO LARIWA has never delivered such a first rate batch of songs of L.A. alienation (beats the hell out of X on that!) for CRUZADOS, who Plugz became. Check "Achin'" and "American," a song to horrify in it's simple portrait of an average Joe "white powdered donuts, turns on the set." Lastly, there's the entire back catalog of German minimalists CAN (Cannibalism is the favorite), who had a big influence on the later 1st 2 LPs P.I.L., and the live Final Damnation excellent document of the farewell tour of THE DAMNED featuring the reunion of the amazing BRIAN JAMES' led original lineup (first 2 LPs). Two other notable reissues on other labels include Homestead's making THE CHILLS' "Kaleidoscope World" early single compilation available domestically for the first time (any record with "Pink Frost" is a must!), and Communion/Syclad doing likewise with The SYD BARRETT tribute LP Beyond The Wildwood, which you'll need for the MOCK TURTLES' pulverizing "No Good Trying!"

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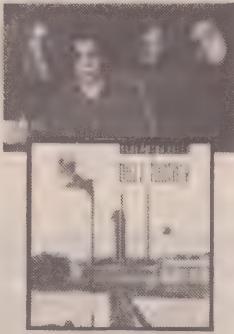
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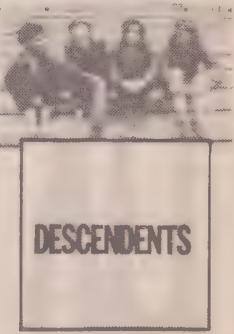
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You may have noticed the elimination of the word "indie" from my column. This was done purposefully, as we are entering into a new era in which many of the top indie bands are being scooped up by major record labels (i.e. Chills, House of Love, Wedding Present.) However, the 45's reviewed here will all carry the "spirit of indies" with them -- whether good or bad. A chart rating of 7 or above is worth purchasing.

THE STANDOUT

THE CHILLS - "Heavenly Pop Hit" (Slash) The giant leap to a major label has not curtailed the brilliance of the Chills. Actually, it has cultivated it. This song is an excursion into pop history which is as wonderful as its title would suggest. The chiming organ and rollicking melody hark back to and embody the splendor of The Beach Boys' "Wouldn't It Be Nice," yet steer clear of any slight hint of imitation. While the ebullient music sweeps you away, it can almost blind you to Martin Phillipps' ambivalence over the struggle to obtain a hit single in a world where no one may really care.. And now, "we can dive into suns, though it's not recommended." (9 3/4)



- THE ORCHIDS - "Something for the Longing" (Sarah Records)

Sarah's most consistent popsters, the Orchids, are back with another serving of delicate and moody reflections. You can find its obvious similarity to REM's "King of Birds" objectionable,

or you can choose to overlook it, and revel in its wistful beauty. Improved production effects (Sarah style) help to add a somewhat different dimension and feel to this record. Overlookers will be duly rewarded. (8)

- **THE EDESEL AUCTIONEER** - "Our New Skin" (Decoy c/o Vinyl Solution, 231 Portobello Rd., London W11 1LT, England) Mega City 4 label-mates and America-affected Edsel Auctioneer present a laudable debut 45. Despite their obvious debt to Warehouse-era Husker Du, the Auctioneers put forth a riveting and rough foray into streamlined garage rock & roll. Stops and starts, ubiquitous guitars, and a monotone vocalist help define these up comers as contenders for the vacancy left by that Minneapolis 3-piece. (7)

- **THE FAT LADY SINGS** - "Dronning Maud Land" (Fourth Base, 33 Alexander Rd., Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire hp20 2nr) Richness of voice, Celtic feel and brooding emotions set the stage for another FLS 45 - their 4th. This quiet ballad takes time to grow on you, but once it does, you notice the intricate detail of the songwriting and the gripping voice of Nick Kelly. A noticeable step down in production from their somewhat over-blown "Arc-light" 45, it's a welcome change which keeps this delicate song from crossing over the fine line between sincerity & pomposity. No, this band will never again put out a song as enthralling as "Fear and Favour" (1986), but if your expectations are kept in check, they can still capture your heart. Let's hope that their expectant signing to a major label will not compromise their sound and throw them over the line. (7 1/2)

- SEE SEE RIDER - "She Sings Alone" (Lazy, 83 Clerkenwell Rd., London EC1 5AR, England)



Male & female vocals erupt into a crescendo as this enticing juggernaut comes crashing through your stereo. A riveting debut that evokes images of My Bloody Valentine with the guitars turned down.

This soaring surge of a song is but one from this band's 4-song e.p. It's no coincidence that this e.p. is on Lazy since the closest reference pts. are early Primitives and the aforementioned My Bloody Valentine - both Lazy alumni. Also, Pete Tweedie, ex-

Primitives drummer, is on sticks. Regardless, this band stands on its own and screams out to be heard among the hordes of mediocre contenders. Check check them out out as they are waiting to turn turn you on. (9)

- INSPIRAL CARPETS - "This is how it Feels" (Mute)

From the Teardrop Explodes-ish beginning to the sombre tone and melancholy lyrics, you know this isn't your normal Inspiral venture. It's a stab at commercialism, but paradoxically, a step forward. The organ is poignant rather than blistering, and the whole feel is sort of gloomy. I guess these Manchester merchants are finally trying to understate their way into our affections. (7 1/2)

- THE BARDOTS "Sad Anne"

- SHINE - "Bite the Apple"
(Wilde Club records, 50 Oak Lane,
Norwich NR6 7DD, England)

Both singles on one 12" e.p. - an interesting idea. A good double bill as well. The Bardots' wistful offering is terribly engaging. Their early-Creation sound is familiar ground, covered tastefully well. (7) Shine are even better with a cascading and sublime outing. It has the bite of the Wolfhounds' "Anti-Midas Touch", with a measured dose of indie enthusiasm. Shine shine. (8)

- POWER OF DREAMS "Power of Dreams" e.p.
(Setanta, c/o 123 Shakespeare Rd.,
London SE 24, England)

"Stand clear - out of my way," I shriek, as I rush to cue up this Sean O'Neill produced debut by these highly acclaimed Irishmen. Ferocious. That's right, they live up to the hype - a rarity these days. "A Little Piece of God" is a mover and shaker with its screams of "release me" and its melodic, albeit slowed down, Wedding Present approach. "Mother's Eyes" is so urgent and emotional it'll have you too exhausted to turn over the record. No problem - play 'em again I say. Nowhere else could a singer bemoan his mother's passing and make you feel like you want to jump up and down.

Clear the soggy Manchester
dance floors and Scotchgurd the
Inspirail Carpets - Celtic rock is
happening. (8 3/4)

- THE HOUSE OF LOVE - "Beatles and the Stones" (Fontana)

I fell in love with this ditty after hearing it played live last year in the UK. Its dreamy, incandescent texture and soft, mellifluous vocals provide a stark setting for this paean to those 60's rock pioneers. Guy Chadwick & crew seem to do better when their backs are up against the wall.

than when they're riding a wave. Life after "Christine," part 3. (9)

- ACTION PAINTING! - "These Things Happen" (Sarah)

Run-of-the-mill, garden variety, independent product. Though this won't make you beat up your sister, it won't make you kiss her, either. Trite vocals and weak production stifle this sometimes endearing 45. Oh well, we've all heard it before. (6)

- THE TRASH CAN SINATRAS - "Obscurity Knocks" (Go! Records, c/o I Hate Music, No. 1 Glencairn Square, Kilmarnock KA1 4AQ, Scotland)



If only Roddy Frame had gone commercial with a song like this instead of his ersatz dance soul, this world would be a better place. My lament springs from the fact that

"Obscurity Knocks" is a harmonious, beguiling treasure. The Trashcans are a Scottish band that link the halcyon days of Postcard-era Aztec Camera with anthemic 90's indie pop to provide an alternative to the dance-crazed English scene. Nothing new, yet nothing old. For the moment - but I swear I'll be playing it in 2 years. Never has cynicism and discontent with one's place in life sounded so jaunty ".... face down in a sock-stenched room all by myself." It'll ring true. (9)

- THE CHAIRS - "Crestfallen" (Pink Halo)
This disappointing follow-up to "Honey, I Need a Girl of a Different Stripe" conjures up images of Squeeze, Housemartins & Elvis Costello-style pop. However, it has nothing to add to this tired genre, and is merely content to frolic amongst it as a pale imitation. Uninspired, insipid and colorless. (3)

- BRIGHTER - "Noah's Ark" (Sarah)

Another yearning tune from this quiet bunch. The Cowboy Junkies rock louder, yet that's not supposed to be the point - right?! Waiting for this song to build is as fruitless as waiting for a Cleveland Indians' World Series. I am not necessarily against a restrained ballad, when there is soul, moving vocals, or a stirring melody - but you aren't going to find any of that here - even with a Hubble telescope. Pleasant is just not good enough these days. (5)

- LUSH - "Mad Love" e.p. (4AD)

Ethereal is an overused word when it

comes to reviewing 4AD releases, but it does apply here in spades. Slow layers of guitars and a female singer with a dreamy voice - Lush are suggestive of My Bloody Valentine exposed to the sun. "De-Luxe" is most enjoyable, possessing a real infectious chorus and spiritual texture that refuses to stay out of your head. While "Downer" is a real downer, and "Thoughtforms" is a solicitous remix off their Scar LP, Lush still succeed, albeit clumsily, in guiding us into their profound heavenly landscape. (8)

- THE CHARLATANS "Indian Rope"
(Dead Dead Good)

Manchester dance beat meets "I Shot the Sheriff" at a Spencer Davis Group reunion. Charlatans forge similar but different ground than the Inspiralers, opting to pivot off the late 60's organ-laden sound rather than the garage period's organ-laden sound. The inherent problem with this e.p. is that it's totally for the moment. It fits in nicely between the Happy Mondays & Stone Roses on a dance tape, though 6 months from now it's musical worth will inevitably get devalued as the Manchester scene starts to decline. Blood, Sweet & Tears - forever? For now, it's a (7)

- RIDE - "Play" EP (Creation)

The difficult second e.p. is here - a mere shadow of its formidable predecessor, "Chelsea Girl." More attention is paid to detail than to style. "Chelsea Girl" rode slapdash over everything else as the 90's arrived. "Play" mimics where it should lead, walks when it should jump - almost as if they didn't dare to do anything adventurous. The way the UK press lavishes praise on these guys, it may almost breed inertia. Manic guitars permeate the e.p.'s best moment, "Like a Daydream," but the song culminates in sounding like Dinosaur Jr. covering the Byrds. Ride have the potential to be much more. (6)

- THE FIELD MICE "The Autumn Store Pt.1"
"The Autumn Store Pt.2"
(Sarah Records)

Two singles released simultaneously. Curiously, the concept is better than the execution. The Mice's "have drum machine - will travel" ethic may have finally run aground. Sweet vocals and simple sentiments help buoy Pt.1's "If You Need Someone" from drowning in its own wispiness. Pt. 2 cannot sustain Pt. 1's buoyancy as "Song Six's" rudimentary attack on the male gender lends itself to somnolence. The B-sides are no safe haven either, as the Mice seem to have left their creativity and charm back in their early

45's, "Emma's House" and "Sensitive." Their simple songs used to thrill - now they often bore. Yawn.

Part 1 (6) Part 2 (4)

- ULTRA VIVID SCENE - "Staring at the Sun" (4AD)

Witness Only Ones zest - electropopified. Is Peter Perrett listening? UVS at last sound like a full band rather than one man turning knobs. Observe attractive chord changes and knowingly self-assured vocals. "Staring at the Sun" is a worthy successor to the sublime "Mercy Seat." However, beware of the e.p.'s other songs, as they are clinically dehumanized. (7 1/2)

- SPRINGHOUSE - "Menagerie Keeper"
(Singles Only Label, c/o 249
Eldridge St. #14, NY, NY 10002)

The face of the American independent scene gets an uplift with this debut from New York City-based Springhouse. A guitar-driven tune with resonating bass that pays homage to bygone heroes the Chameleons, while at the same time forging a style and sound that is just beginning to blossom. The flock-fleeing evangelists are brought to task as the song builds into its scintillating climax. The production is somewhat more accomplished than your average indie debut - which sometimes steers the song into dangerous U2 areas. Somewhat more emotive is "Soul Astray," the more stripped down B-side whose raw production allows it to poignantly shine through. Overall, a startling first step that is worlds apart in sound and approach from most other U.S. bands. (8)

- THE MOCK TURTLES - "And Then She Smiles" (Imaginary)

Strict 60's pop purveyors, the Mock Turtles are capable of putting out extremely enjoyable slabs of vinyl. However, this routine outing tries but cannot stand out from the rest of the pack. A hodgepodge of all the bands they've covered on those Imaginary tributes (Kinks, Byrds, Syd Barrett,) it's bouncy and sprightly, but ultimately faceless. The Three O'Clock have done it all before, and better as well. (5 1/2)

- HEAVENLY - "I Fell in Love Last Night" (Sarah)

Next stop sugarccloudland. It's sweet as honey, twice as fun, and what do you know - charming female vocals. Bands travelling this territory must be careful to avoid falling into that twee indie female vocalist trap. However, there is precedent for bands like Heavenly maturing into formidable popsters (Girls At Our Best springs to

mind), yet at this tenuous juncture in their careers we can content ourselves with this effervescent if inconsistent 45. It's about this time in the reviews that you realize just how many singles the Sarah label is putting forth. Do they ever sleep over there? Let's continue to pray for their insomnia. Heavenly chalks up a (7).

- ENERGY ORCHARD - "Sailortown" (MCA) Trampling the Waterboys' territory like a zamboni over a popsicle, these Irishmen create a grand, full-bodied aura. It's energized and sensational in an over-the-top sort of way. Though it's high on theatrics, you will still succumb to its seductive grip. Along with The Fat Lady Sings, Power of Dreams, and Into Paradise, are we to project a new Celtic invasion? If that is true, based on this song, Energy Orchard will be its navy. (7 1/2)

- MY BLOODY VALENTINE - "Glider" EP (Creation)

A cataclysmic, psychedelic wall of guitars introduces this long overdue vinyl product from England's dreamy noise vendors. Moving along from 1988's important Isn't Anything LP to ford heretofore infrequent land-scapes (at least since the Beatles), MBV spew forth haphazard tempos punctuated with sweet rest stops to defy our boundaries of musical taste while discreetly charming our pants off. "Soon" and "Off Your Face" stand out on this insidiously enticing platter. With all these layers to plow through, the final verdict may be out on this one for some time. For now, I'll gingerly grant it an (8 1/2).

- KATYDIDS - "Lights Out" (WEA)

Don't get fooled. This harmless 45 with the perfunctory Nick Lowe production will be out of your memory the moment you pick up the stylus. Slick and inane, you want to rebel against its joyfulness. Mostly, it tends to be in a comfortable Housemartins vein, only with a female singer. More innocuous than the "Father Dowling Mysteries" - except you put up with "Father Dowling" because you know it's followed by "Twin Peaks." What you do after playing the Katydids is up to you. (3)

LABEL SPOTLIGHT - DECOY

(c/o Vinyl Solution, 231 Portobello Rd., London W11 1LT, England)

Known up until a few months ago as the label Mega City 4 are on, Decoy has started to expand and establish a name for itself. While post punk guitars are still to be heard, some of the new signings stake out different

avenues. Where the aforementioned Edsel Auctioneer navigate familiar Decoy waters with a good bit of success, the Venus Beads' "Days of Nightmare" is a Decoy test tube baby. Recorded in a cigarette machine, the Beads employ techniques already perfected by the Megas. Once you wade through the blurred production, the 1978 sneer - ala Stiff Little Fingers - will greet you and take you for a ride. (6)

Hopefully, that ride will end at the feet of the Would-Be's ("I'm Hardly Ever Wrong.") Imagine if the Sundays had guts and you'll be half way to the Would Be's. A cunningly sly song with irresistible articulation by Julie McDonnell. You'll want to kiss her every time she smugly chants "and I'm hardly ever wrong." And from the sound of this 45, I'm not in a position to argue with her. This is the type of single British groups deliver so well. You know - nothing much going on musically, then all of a sudden, a twisted phrase or vocal inflection catches you off guard and you're hooked. And you know, I'm hardly ever wrong. (8)

Female singers are all the rage at Decoy. Newly signed Bollweevils' "Talk to Me" is another uplifting release. Reverberating guitars and Pauline Murray-like vocals give this song sustenance and style. It loses when put up against the Would-Be's, but stark contrasts suggest greater things ahead. (6 1/2)

This leaves us with Decoy's pride and joy. Mega City 4's new e.p. "There Goes My Happy Marriage." In retrospect, I underrated last year's "Awkward Kid" single, therefore I am determined to properly evaluate this one. "Finish" is not standard Megafare. Almost sounds British invasion-like as its self-conscious cynicism ("and the only pleasure that I get is knowing it") pleasantly amuses. "Thanx" is a more typical Mega outing with its pulsating guitars and garbled vocals. "Square Through a Circle" has by far the catchiest chorus on the e.p. and swirls with convictions to close out this record. Very consistent, yet not the progression I was counting on. (7) It's so difficult to alter a sound that has been so vivid and refreshing, let alone mildly successful. Few have survived a transition like that in 1 piece. Here's hoping the Megas change the odds.

THE 80's - by JEFF KELSON

Now that the second-best decade for 45's has passed us by (needless to say, the 60's were the best), it is

only fitting that I chart those 25 golden moments that receded my sarcasm, strengthened my resolve, and placed me in sheer ecstasy for something like 3 minutes.

1. "Love Will Tear Us Apart"
Joy Division (1980)
2. "Pink Frost"
The Chills (1984)
3. "Treason"
The Teardrop Explodes (1980)
4. "Blue Boy"/"Lovesick"
Orange Juice (1980)
5. "Fear and Favour"
The Fat Lady Sings (1986)
6. "Simply Thrilled Honey"
Orange Juice (1980)
7. "Wet Blanket"
The Chills (1988)
8. "Going Underground"
The Jam (1980)
9. "Ceremony"
New Order (1981)
10. "Felicity"
Orange Juice (1982)
11. "Upside Down"
Jesus & Mary Chain (1984)
12. "Rolling Moon"
The Chills (1984)
13. "Candyskin"
Fire Engines (1981)
14. "This Charming Man"
The Smiths (1983)
15. "Chance Meeting"
Josef K (1981)
16. "Revolutionary Spirit"
The Wild Swans (1982)
17. "New Risen"
Eyeless in Gaza (1983)
18. "Frans Hals"
McCarthy (1987)
19. "4 Hours"
Clock DVA (1981)
20. "She Bangs the Drums"
Stone Roses (1989)
21. "Death and the Maiden"
The Verlaines (1982)
22. "Gigantic"
The Pixies (1988)
23. "Oblivious"
Aztec Camera (1983)
24. "Hand in Glove"
The Smiths (1983)
25. "Just Like Gold"/"We Could Send Letters" - Aztec Camera (1981)

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rock bands. All this is now changing. Legions of up & coming bands are creating a wonderful alternative scene augmented by clubs that are receptive to hosting this music.

In addition, high quality radio stations, such as Ft. Lauderdale's WPKX & Miami's WVUM, are dedicated to playing alternative music, including many South Fla. acts. All this is encouraging for a region that many non-Top 40 acts routinely bypass because of its prohibiting geographical limitations (i.e., you can't play a gig in S. Fla. while passing through on tour, since it's surrounded on 3 sides by water.)

Further promise is provided by the "classic" rock stations who are featuring "locals only shows" that spotlight new S. Fla. talent. These shows are not sequestered away on Mondays at 4am, but rather on Sunday nights & other prime times.

WHO ARE THESE BANDS THAT ARE CAUSING ALL THIS COMMOTION?

BROKEN SPECTACLES

First and foremost in my mind and heart are Broken Spectacles. This 4-piece have songs that overflow with joyous harmonies, inner depths, and emotive feelings that are in short supply in most other bands. Add to that a trio of male voices that rate up there with any in the business, and you'll think they're capable of anything. Although an up-close inspection will reveal some sub-standard tunes and awkward moments, these are to be expected in light of their inexperience as well as their fervor to gain acceptance from their audience.

Comparisons with L.A. band The Last (sans the organ) are easily made, yet the similarity probably emanates from both bands' mutual influences rather than from direct contact. (I'll bet neither band has heard of the other.) Still, the Spectacles do incorporate that special 60's (what a decade) feel with fresh 90's vigor and have the potential to astonish the most apathetic listener. Songs, voices, exuberance, & feel - it's enough to keep you off the beach. 4 Song EP Available: 3330-E Atlanta St., Hollywood, FL 33021

VESPER SPARROW

This female quartet is reminiscent of Salem 66, both in sound and in resistance to acknowledging their gender the way other all-female acts are usually expected to. These women know the importance of songcraft. Great attention has been paid to "Highway," a song off their 6-song cassette EP (available by calling (305) 791-0187), which blisters across like early Siouxsie and is a venerable concert favorite. "Don't Give Your Love Away" is how you wish 10,000 Maniacs would sound as lead-singer Kelly's voice does suggest that of Natalie Merchant in some respects.

The secret weapon of Vesper Sparrow is the voice and engaging stage presence of 2nd vocalist & rhythm guitarist, Mary Karlzen. Her winsome and sweet voice contrasts well with Kelly's more rough & physical vocals to provide another side to VS - as crystallized in "Come November," a swirling and stomping sing along that should have single written all over it. This song was the standout in both gigs I witnessed in



Normally, when you think of South Florida, You envision sun and surf; not alternative

Miami's fabulous Churchill's Pub (Great, unpretentious ambiance and oh, those English ales). Although VS lack a certain variety in their songwriting, any trip to S. Fla. can be enriched by checking out their gigs.

The Others:

Depending on your taste in music, many other S. Fla. groups are worth going out of your way for:

THE MAVERICKS: Soulful, countrified rockabilly with a lead singer whose voice will charm and absorb you. They're real happening down here.

ZERO CREW: Reggae at its finest! Their rhythm section is tighter than Jack Benny's pursestrings. And lead singer Magda's voice bears an uncanny resemblance to that of the late Bob Marley. Needless to say, many Wailers covers will be performed if you have the great fortune to catch them. Actually, they play 5 nights a week in Miami's Coconut Grove. You will scoff at the pundits who are predicting reggae's demise when you get exposed to Zero Crew's grooves.

THE GOODS: The Goods exemplify "good" ole fun via the Replacements. Fast, melodic songs with the occasional goofy cover. Guaranteed to leave you with a smile.

CORAL GABLES: Physical, loud and gothic, the Gables have a strong college following who frequent their performances. Not my brand of soft drink, but their fizz seems to register with many enthusiasts.

Finally, the "free" (what a bargain) paper, New Times, will provide you with the dates and locations of all important gigs. When the sun sets - a scene begins.

REVIEWS BY ED MARSHALL

"Food For Your Head"

(Some thoughts and reviews by Eddie Marshall aka Ed Hed)

Bad Brains - Quickness LP; The ROIR Sessions CD

I was 15 years old when I heard wildman DJ Tim Sommer play a demo of "At the Movies" from the Bad Brains on WNYU's "Noise the Show" (previously Oi! the show). Not to sound overly corny, but that half hour picnic of punk/hardcore changed my life. I can easily say today that the Bad Brains are one of my favorite bands to ever touch my ears (alas they have no number, as I prefer not to rank my favorite bands - it's too bothersome and is continually changing). The point here is: I will always dig the Bad Brains. Period. After the band split up, and re-emerged in May of 1988 with a new vocalist (some rasta guy ..) and Mackie (ex-CroMags/Urban Bright) on drums, I was there, at the Ritz. Yes, true - they were nowhere near the same as the real Bad Brains (a friend of mine, also a big Bad Brains fan nearly fell asleep there, believe it or not, Ripley..). But at least I gave them a shot. Now, Bad Brains are back.. but judging from their live appearances from last summer and the recent Quickness LP, it appears they may have lost a step (HR no longer does his acrobatics and backflips during the "At the Movies" solo). Quickness just doesn't quite have the incredible songs of the ROIR cassette (now on CD), the Rock For Light LP (since re-released on CD with a new mix, but I haven't heard it), or the I Against I LP. Here, the band tends to delve more into the realm of metal than before (perhaps due to the presence of Mackie, who plays "drums on all selections"). There are still good tunes: "The Messengers" is a blazing basher in Bad Brains style, with a killer skank break in the middle; "With the Quickness" borrows the catchy riff from Kraut's "Juvenile Justice" off their An Adjustment to Society LP; "Don't Blow No Bubbles" is fast, straightforward punk; and there is even a medley-of-sorts using their first studio cut "Don't Bother Me" (found on the Best of Limp Comp.). Although it's not up to par, and you may not like Quickness, just don't give up on the Bad Brains. (Caroline)

Bastro - Diablo Guapo LP; "Shoot Me a Deer" b/w "Goiter Blazes" 7"
Fast, dissonant, tightly rolled, near industrial, speeding train .. Thud-thudding bass, pounding drummer (no more drum machine) .. Bastro is sublimated frustration of some sort .. Energy that charges through you, not melody .. "Engaging the Reverend" sounds like a more primitive Big Black or Rapeman - hard start/stops, whumping (yes, whumping) bass .. "Pretty Smart On My Part" starts off like revved up Johnny Cash, but

settles into a fast, Naked Raygun-like cruncher .. The single is off the LP, but the b-side "Goiter Blazes", with a cutting, post-punk riff, is the most memorable cut here .. note: Check out the cover of the single (squeamish beware!) - it appears to be a photo of a med school class from 1908 posing with some very used cadavers "Usefulness does not end after death" .. (Homestead)

Big Boys - The Wreck Collection LP

A compilation of demos, live cuts, and "ruff mixes" from one of Austin, Texas's most important neo-hardcore contributions .. Along with the Minutemen, the Big Boys gave the early-eighties its first taste of American hardcore-funk .. The Big Boys were a handful of split personalities rolled into one .. One moment they're obnoxious off-key horn noise, leading into funkied up, horn riddled, near dance tunes in the flavor of Gang of Four/APB (see "We Got Soul" and "Funk Off") .. All of a sudden smiles turn somber as the smooth drama of Joy Division/Mission of Burns creeps in to screw with your emotions ("Sound On Sound", an instrumental, and two eight track demos called "Distance" and "Influence", are heavy bass lines surrounded by floating guitars and a strong backbeat) .. But just as you get your mindset settled, the Big Boys slip in that coldwateronyourcrotch change with quick, taunting peppy, punk cuts "Frat Cars" and "Shut Up", and the more gloomy "Let's Play God" and "Manipulation" sounding a bit like the Dead Kennedys .. If you never gave these guys a listen, do yourself a favor and taste this nostalgia - at least some of it is bound to agree with you .. (Unseen Hand)

Das Damen - Mousetrap LP; "Noon Daylight" b/w "Damen Dance" 7"

Whining vocals and a psychedelic, uncontrolled lead guitar draped over running bass lines .. Not quite Dinosaur Jr., but Das Damen have come a ways from the days of their New York Hardcore roots of the Misguided .. The sweet hooks of the single a-side "Noon Daylight" (also on the LP), and the pop feel of "Somewhere Sometime" make one forget Das Damen are from New York, not Minneapolis .. The back cover has a great shot of a cat caught in midair, diving at something dangling in front of its face (is this cat, perhaps, Das Damen?) .. (Twin/Tone)

Death of Samantha - Come All Ye Faithless LP

Warren Zevon joins Hanoi Rocks? No! .. Rock & Roll-Pop (Hey! Sounds like some pretty hip candy - sorry..) with piano and horns .. Holds your attention, but nothing to write home about .. John Petkovic's loose, baritone, yodeley voice, crossing somewhere between Warren Zevon/Richard Hell/David Johanson is interesting at first, but after a few songs turns rather grating .. Drummer Steve-O has some fast fills, but all in all Death of Samantha don't do much for me .. (Homestead)

Fugazi - Repeater LP

Intelligent, angry, defiant, intense .. Hard edge, start-stops, groovin .. Fugazi seems to take on more of a heavy sound here, with less funk roots showing .. Ian MacKaye's guitar work is getting much better .. I must say, though, I enjoy Ian's vocals over Guy Picciotto's - gems like "Merchandise" (in the same vein as "Waiting Room" from the first mini LP) blow me away .. Why does MacKaye do primarily backgrounds? Maybe it is feared that there would be too great a chance of a Minor Threat/Egghunt/Embrace soundalike (quite unlikely, I feel) .. Buy.. (Dischord)

Lazy Cowgirls - How It Looks, How It Is LP

From the West Coast .. Straight forward bar-chord punk rock .. Reminds me of Ed Gein's Car .. Guitar sounds a bit like Black Flag from "Nervous Breakdown" days, only with much less style .. If you have a busy schedule, listen only to the first two or three songs - it can save you some time, since the most of this is the same song played over and over and over .. Very appropriate title .. (Sympathy)

Moving Targets - Brave Noise LP

Can't tell you how happy I was to get this, the Targets' long awaited second LP (a follow-up to the incredible Burning In Water) .. Heard them first a few years back at Tramps with the Lemonheads, and have been a fan ever since .. The Moving Targets make some of the most explosive, yet easily listenable hardcore/punk around .. Guitarist/vocalist Kenny Chambers creates a wall of guitar to complement the rich, flowing bass lines of Chuck Freeman and the always-on-the-money, heavy-handed pounding of drummer Pat Brady .. Variety here is great, with roaring blasts of guitar in songs such as "Nothing Changes" and "In the Way", contrasted with the beautiful, mood setting bass of "June 7th" .. The textured layers of "Separate Hearts" made me gasp at first listen .. What I can't understand is Chambers' lack of focus (with regard to vinyl and live shows) on the Targets, as opposed to his other band Bullet Lavelta -Moving Targets are excellent and deserve both his and our full attention .. Buy! .. (Taang)

Reagan Youth LP

A re-release from the New Yawk Hardcore scene of the early eighties .. This poorly produced flurry of hardcore-punk at its primal documents the angry young rebels during the peak of hardcore .. My fave here from eight or so years ago was and is "USA", with "A for Anarchy" .. (New Red Archives)

Soulside - Hot Bodhi-gram LP and 7"

Heavy sounding attempt at a blend of DC hardcore with a touch of funk .. The idea is good, if the songwriting can back it up .. Fugazi does it, Bad Brains do it (on I Against I), Faith No More did it .. Soulside takes aim, but misses its mark somewhere along the way - nothing here really grabbed me .. They come off sounding young and raw .. Single is better than the LP, with superior production and a fast, melodic, hardcore thrasher "Other Side" on the b-side .. (Dischord)

Springhouse - "Menagerie Keeper" b/w "Soul Astray" 7"; Various live shows

A mist of guitar .. Punching, to the point bass lines .. A solid, tasteful beat .. Springhouse combines intelligent, insightful lyrics with pleasant melodies you find yourself humming on the way to work .. The electrified digital delay of Mitch Friedland's classical guitar provides a dissonant blanket for Larry Heinemann's melodic bass, and Jack Rabid's touch of drum spice (not too overpowering ..) .. "Menagerie Keeper", as hinted by Jim Bakker's pretty pose on the cover, talks of the demise of a false idol, while the equally good b-side "Soul Astray", speaks of the downward spiralling of a friend .. Their always tight live sets are filled with equally memorable tunes, such as "Layers", an ecological song; "A-Ha" and "Alley Park", some moody, post-punk with heavy bass; and "Eskimo", an ode to the street and subway dwellers of NYC .. If you haven't seen them, go .. and if you haven't bought the single yet, buy it .. (Singles Only Label)

Three - LP

Brought to us courtesy of Dischord, representing efforts from 1986 to 1988 (released in 1989) of this band called Three .. Vocalist and lyricist Jeff Turner shares his introspect and personal philosophical views enclosed by the hard driving guitar leads of Mark Haggerty, and sometimes blazing backbeat beat provided by ex-Minor Threat drummer Jeff Nelson and bassist Steve Niles .. Best songs here are "Swann Street" - a strong, melodic pop song that reminds me a bit of the Nils, and buried in the middle of side two is "Rejection", a fast song with great Dag Nasty style breaks and a great bass intro (listen to the chorus, which happens to be the only words, or rather word "Rejection", - me thinks I hear MacKaye's voice here, although the only credits listed are for mixing by Ian) .. (Dischord)

Wolfhounds - Happy Shopper 12" EP

1989 release from England .. Pleasant pop with Undertones-like hooks .. B-side takes an angry stab at Comsat Angels brand of post-punk on "No Soap In a Dirty War", along with two other pop cuts .. This is the first I've heard from the Wolfhounds, but certainly not the last .. (Midnight Music)

TIM BROWN'S RAINY DAY REVIEWS

DIED PRETTY-EVERY BRILLIANT EYE (RCA/"Whitlam Square" U.K. 12") -Buy this album! The Died Pretty come up with a totally uplifting and rocking album. This has the best production of any of their releases by far. Albeit more commercial sounding, it still has the trademark Died Pretty sound. The organ is turned down a bit in favor of more guitar and louder vocals while the songs seem to have a brighter, more positive tone to them. "Whitlam Square" is the U.K. single off the LP. It's a great song, but my favorite tracks are "Sight Unseen," "Face Toward the Sun," "Rule the Day," and "True Fools Fall." I call them killer 'cause they slay me! (9 out of 10)

THAT PETROL EMOTION-CHEMICRAZY (Virgin)-The Petrols put out their best album since their first, MANIC POP THRILL. What I like about this one is that the music and production are simple and straight, no bullshit. They achieve good, comfortable grooves without a lot of keyboards, samples and mediocre attempts at funk. Best cuts: "Hey Venus," "Scum Surfin'," "Head Staggered," and "Blue to Black." (7 out of 10)

CRAMPS-STAY SICK (Enigma)-The Cramps will never sell out; that's a safe bet. Four years to come up with this album, and I can't honestly say it's been worth the wait, but it is better than A DATE WITH ELVIS. The best thing about STAY SICK are the cool tunes: "Short'nin' Bread," "Pills," "Muleskinner Blues," by the late, great hillbilly, Jimmy Rodgers, and "Her Love Rubbed Off," by the great Carl Perkins. If you still like the Cramps or have recently discovered their wonderful brand of garage-rockabilly depravity, I'm sure you'll dig this. (6 out of 10)

VERLAINE'S-HALLELUIAH ALL THE WAY HOME (Homestead)-I'm really glad Jack gave me this to review! Quite a pleasant surprise as I



BAD BRAINS LP



REAGAN YOUTH reissue

haven't really had a chance to get a good listen to any of the New Zealand bands. This band probably would've been signed to Postcard records had they existed ten years ago. They have a very homespun, folksy quality to them and interesting instrumentation (some strings, accordian, etc.) At times, it almost sounds like Robert Wyatt singing for Josef K. The lyrics are very Morrissey-like--melancholic, longing and loving (or hating), but also are more story-like and personal to whichever Verlaine wrote them. I think I'll enjoy this album for some time. Thanks, Jack! (8 out of 10)

LOOP-Arc Lite" (U.K. 12")-Seeing as this is the only Loop record I've heard, I can't say much. The B-side, "Sunburst," is an o.k. Sonic Youth ripoff. The A-side, "Arc Lite," is a repetitive song that sounds like a tape-loop and doesn't seem to warrant repeated listening. Funnily enough, there's two mixes of "Arc Lite." I wonder why. I would think this isn't their best offering, as I've heard positive things about them. Then again, it could be hype. (3 out of 10)

ELEVENTH DREAM DAY-Borscht" ep (Atlantic)-I've got to give Atlantic Records credit. This record is on vinyl, with a nice cover and eight songs (seven live); it's an American release by a band who probably doesn't "shift" a helluva lot of "units," but play and sound more sincere than 95% of Atlantic's metal or disco acts. It's nice to see them take a chance. If you dig loud guitars and upbeat drums with more enthusiasm than attitude, this is for you. It's not unsimilar to earlier Dream Syndicate, if they were from Chicago or Detroit. (7 out of 10)

NIRVANA-BLEACH (Sub Pop)-Although this contains a couple of ok trax, I think this is yet another totally overrated release from Sub Pop. I give these releases a fair listen, and I'm the first person to love loud guitar music, but everyone on this label that's so "important" seems to lack one important factor - songwriting. The Fluid seem to be the only band on Sub Pop w/any kind of soul. Maybe I'm missing something, but I still say Sub Pop sucks.

WONDERSTUFF-Circle Square" (Polydor 12"-U.K.)-Yet another cool release from the 'Stuff. This 12" contains two mixes. One is kind of funked out w/some neat wah-wah guitar and a groove-y bass, while the second mix adds violin and a little more guitar for a thicker, more pop rock sound. The B-side, "Our New

Song," is more standard Wonderstuff. They're not ashamed to write a pop song! (7 out of 10)

WE ARE GOING TO EAST YOU-EVERYWHEN (TVT)-

Electric folky-pop that almost sounds like the Go-Go's meet the Buzzcocks. The best parts are the guitars and songwriting. The main problem I can't seem to get past, yet, is the production, which is very, very sterile sounding. Otherwise, I think there's lots of potential here w/some room for improvement. My favorite track is "Heart in Hand." (6 out of 10--it's a grower.)

LOU REED & JOHN CALE-SONGS FOR

DRELLA(Sire/WB)-Who would've thought 23 years later these 2 guys would be brought together again (by death) to make a great album. I thought this was going to be live, actually hoping, after seeing one of the performances last fall. However, I was not let down after finding it was a studio l.p. Fifteen new tracks, for the most part based on Andy Warhol, making this Velvet's fan very happy. It almost sounds like new age Velvet Underground, but don't let that scare you. It just shows how ahead of their time the Velvets were. Vocals are shared, some spoken, some sung, in very simple melodies. All the music is played by John and Lou, as well, so there's no messing around-the point is made in each track. Definitely worth it if you consider yourself a real fan of these guys. (9 out of 10)

FLAT DUO JETS-FLAT DUO JETS(Dog Gone)-A very hip debut from this Athens, Ga. band. I've heard they sound like the Cramps, but now that I've heard the record, only to some extent. They actually come across with a slightly more traditional R&B garage bend. Almost like the Tailgators, but younger and with more attitude. Fans of Austin R&B, garage and rockabilly should really pick up on this and dig! (8 out of 10)

JEAN PAUL SARTRE EXPERIENCE-THE SIZE OF FOOD (Communion/Flying Nun)-A great new find for me (thankx, Jack!) and another cool New Zealand band. These guys are kind of like Sonic Youth meets Love and Rockets only more melodic and psychedelic. I've only listened to it a couple of times but I liked it right away and I think I'll have to search out their first LP now. Very definitely--pop meets dissonance. (8 out of 10)

FLUID- GLUE (Subpop)-ok, Subpop, a chance (maybe?) to redeem myself. I actually forgot to mention there were a couple of Nirvana tunes I like. I do respect what you're doing, but happen to think most of your bands are boring. Except the Fluid, that is. If you like the Who, MC5, Dead Boys, Stooges, etc., BUY THEIR RECORDS! GO SEE THEM LIVE! I would not lie to you! Especially live, these GUYS KICK FUCKING ASS. It's loud, it moves, it says something, it's alive! That's it! (9 out of 10)

THE SERVICE-HEAD VS. WALL (Pravda)-Very American sounding, if you know what I mean. Kind of REM meets True West meets Died

Pretty. Melodic songs with jangly and sharp psych-guitar with a neat piano player reminiscent of some latter day Damned, but much simpler. If you're a fan of middle of the road American pop rock (REM,etc.) this M, etc.) this would be worth the bucks. It's grown on me in a couple of listens. (7 out of 10)

STARVATION ARMY-EXECUTION STYLE(Rave)-Grungy pop punk from Cleveland. Heavy on guitar and toughness with vocals reminiscent of the Lime Spiders Mick Blood. These guys are cool in doses, but it's tough to sit (or drive) thru the whole LP. Nothing really new and exciting, but fans of late '70s-early '80s Midwest punk might like it. (5 out of 10)

SOUP DRAGONS-LOVE GOD (Raw TV/Big Life imp.)

I wouldn't be surprised if Sean Dickson were the only member of the band left. He wrote and produced every song on this album, and it sounds like all his vocals as well as a drum machine (hmm...) This album has its moments: "Mother Universe," "Dog Backwards," "Kiss the Gun," plus others. Fans of Primal Scream's "Loaded" will really like "Sweetmeat." All in all, much more sexual and less naive than previous sets of Soup Dragons' songs and much more consistent in overall sound compared to their 1st, THIS IS OUR ART. I like it a lot, but somehow get the feeling Sean tries very hard to keep up with his idea of what hip is, lyrically. Anyway, the music is definitely hip, so dig it! (8 out of 10)

NICK CAVE-THE GOOD SON (Enigma/Mute)-This man needs no intro. I've enjoyed every one of his solo albums so far and this one's no different. The popier he gets (adding strings, etc.) the more he seems to come from a different age, definitely a different state of mind! I think he should collaborate with Tom Waits on a David Lynch movie sound track. And in the meantime I'll listen to this. (8 out of 10)

REVIEWS BY JOHN STEWART

Music For Non-Conformists

by John Stewart

Hello out there Big Takeover readers. After a one issue absence i have with a bigger and hopefully much better column. First Off let me give thanks to Jack for allowing me space in his fanzine to voice my opinion on music and just about anything i please. Secondly thanks to Debora Campbell for allowing me to use her typewriter to write this article. Her kindness and generosity as always are greatly appreciated.

Before i get to my record(Compact Disc, Cassette or whatever) reviews. I must say that seeing the Buzzcocks at The Ritz was indeed a unforgettable experience. An experience i will always treasure. Though i must admit i had my doubts but those were quickly erased with the opening chords of "I Dont Know What To Do With My Life". In other words it was not another Damned Sham(no pun intended toward The Damned.) Also i must mention that the opening band the Lunachicks

were also very enjoyable. Yes it was definitely worth the \$17.50 that i paid out of my hard earned cash.

1. MUDHONEY-MUDHONEY (SUB-POP)

The first full-length after two scorching singles and a mini-lp.(also recommended is the SUB-POP 200 comp. for their grunge version of THE ROSE)

As much as Mudhoney is liked (and in some cases loved) ,they however have their critics who for instance say they are overrated. But once and for all this lp should silence their critics(if not then they still are entitled to their opinion),but enough of babbling lets talk about the lp.This Gift has nice wah-wah sound,while Flat-Out Fuck-ed is a 2-minute burst of energy (rem iniscent of a good 60's garage band) and Keep It Out of My Face which was re-recorded for the lp. Also of note on this lp is Here Comes Sickness and Come To Mind. But if you really want to enjoy Mudhoney ,see them live.

2. L7-SHOVE/PACKIN A ROD (SUB-POP)

This one smokes(Boy,i could see my speakers give off sparks everytime i play this slab of vinyl)Shove is a instant classic loud raunchy and rude, It never lets up at all it keeps delivering all the way thru its 3:10 timing and flip Packin a Rod is a killer too.(Also Recommended is their debut LP on EPITAPH)

3.FUGAZI-3SONGS EP (DISCHORD)

Yet another fine release from these guys.Fugazi never ceases to amaze to me(why as i type this up they have released REPEATER). Song Number One is about people who are quick to criticize and slag others who are not cool enough because they dont look punk or hardcore enough. while Joe Number One is an instrumental which segues into Break-In a song about sexual relations which takes repeated listening in order to fully understand.

4.THE WONDER STUFF-HUP (POLYDOR)

The Wonder Stuff have broken the sophomore jinx and released a fine 2nd lp. (However it will be the last with The Bass Thing who left the group) As always The Wonder Stuff have a wicked sense with songs such Thirty Years In The Bathroom And Radio Ass kiss Which takes nasty swipe a commercial radio. They even threw their fans with tunes such as Gold-en Green a countryish waltz and Unfaithful a rather tender ballad coming from the same band which gave us such wonderful tunes in the past like "It's Yer Money I 'm After,Baby".

But if this were a perfect world Hup would be in the Top10 and The Wonder Stuff would be headlining Radio City Music Hall rather then opening for the Mission U.K. at the Ritz. Oh Well i can still dream.

5.The Rolling Stones -Steel Wheels

Despite the hype surrounding the lp and the tour (not to mention the ridiculous merchandising). It was one of the best albums the Stones put out since 1978's Some Girls the tunes i really enjoyed were Mixed Emotions,Continental Drift and Almost Hear You Sigh. Overall a Decent Effort.

6.LUNACHICKS Double "7" EP (Blast First)

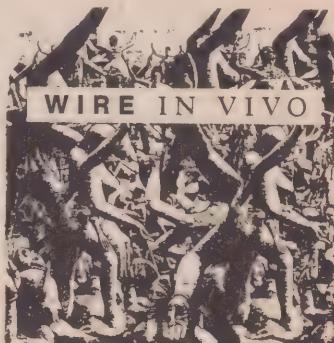
This was meant to be my NO 1 record in the last issue of the Big Takeover Issue which I never got to contribute to. But nearly one year later I still give it a heavy thrashing on my turntable so it still warants a review on my behalf. Some still ask what do the Lunachicks exactly sound like? Well that can be a tough one, I mean the only way I can describe it is like two trains going 150 mph in the same direction and crashing. Yes, train crash music you can enjoy with the whole family. The 4 tunes on the two slabs of vinyl are very catchy and are guaranteed to be etched in your mind. I mean with lyrics such as "I am Jan, Jan I am, I like to eat green eggs and ham." You can not help but love the lunachicks. They are one the most exciting groups that I have heard in quite a while.

7.DEPACHE MODE Violator (Sire/Reprise)

If I am correct this is the 10th album (including live and repackaged material) that Depeche Mode has released. It's hard to believe that they have lasted as long as they did. Depeche Mode has continued to astound its detractors and its critics with their longevity and popularity. Why, as of this writing, they will be doing a stadium tour with their album in the top ten. Normally that does not make a measurement on how good a group is, but this is a decent LP. Not one of their best (like Black Celebration), but Violator stands on its own merit. Besides from the 2 hits which have gotten massive amounts of airplay (Personal Jesus and Enjoy the Silence) which I do like a great deal, especially Personal Jesus with its country and Western guitar twang and wall-ooping machine drum sound makes for a real

WONDER STUFF "Don't Let Me Down Gently" 45

WIRE "In Vivo" 45



good time for all (even those who despise DM will enjoy this one too). Also, Sweetest Perfection, Waiting For the Night, and Policy of Truth (which will be the next single) please my ear a great deal. If you are a big fan of Depeche Mode then obviously you will go out and buy it. But is you're not a big fan, you will be hooked, especially for Personal Jesus alone; and if you have an open mind you might even find yourself liking this particular LP. If not? Well, this is still a free country.

8. MINISTRY A Mind Is a Terrible Thing To Taste (Sire/WB) The 4th album from Alain Jourgenson and Company has been a strange trip for Ministry from the early days as a synthoid pop dance band. Ministry has since speeded up the beat, added heavy distortion to the vocals and have discovered the power and fury of a human drummer and a real lead guitar. Especially on tunes like Thieves, Burning Inside, and Never Believe. Cannibal Song sounds like an outtake from P.I.L.'s Metal Box which is not bad. I much rather have loud guitars. But give credit where credit is due; Ministry is not afraid to mix it up. They even do a rap tune called Test which combines guitars with a destructo beat drum machine just to prove how versatile they are. But the tune that is my favorite on the CD is So What. I mean with lyrics such as "I only kill to know I'm alive", I mean, how can you help but not love Ministry. These guys have such a cockiness and brashness that they can get away with something like that. Buy it and fry your brains, dude.

9. The BEVIS FROND-ANY GAS FASTER (RECK-LESS)

This is the 7th LP by Bevis Frond (that's including the Acid Jam LP). This is one of the straight forward lp's that the Bevis Frond has put out (No 20 minute songs to bore those who who very little attention to begin with) So finally this will put to rest once and for all that he is a 60's revisionist who has no concept of modern music (which is quite contrary since i always he reminded me a lot of The Cure, BOB Mould and Sonic Youth) In my opinion this is his best lp to date. He alternates rave-up's such as Rejection Day (A.M. and P.M.) and Then YOU Wanted Me with Beautiful acoustic tunes such as These Dark Days and Old Sea Dog. But my favorite tune is Good Old Fashioned Pain With Clever Lyrics such as "Do you see your cerebellum as a light bulb or a cog , I saw mine as gristle , so i fed it to the dog" Very graphic indeed.

10. LIE DETECTORS Steel Radial Burnouts From London Nofunny humorous hardcore punk has not died with the Meatmen and Dead Kennedys. It is alive and well with Sparkhill NY's own Lie Detectots. They are able to infuse humour in political tunes such as Ollie For Prison and 1000 Points of Light, "Hey George, read my

lips, I think you're a dick". With such mundane topics as catholic school and toilets in tunes such as Catholic school essay and the Tidy Bowl Man is On My Shitlist. They also pay tribute to Duffey Strode, the 10 year old hell and brimstone preacher in, Duffey You Little Devil. They also do a parody of rockstar telephone hotlines in 1-900-904-LIES and a rip-roaring version of the Hollies Bus Stop which is surprisingly done with a lot of taste and stays faithful to the original version. Definitely worth your while to check into these guys. (Lie Detectors P.O. Box 366 Sparkhill NY 10976 \$4 cash or check, checks made payable to Brian Kopac).

Also on my playlist or watchlist, but did not have the time or space to review, but still deserve mention
Social Distortion- Selftitled (EPK)
The Church- The Stone Roses-LP
The Sundays- Lp (Gettin/Doughente)
Public Enemy-Fear of a Black Planet (Def Jam)
Scrooge- Demo
David Bowie- Sound and Vision (Rykodisc)
Buzzcocks- Product (box set) (time)
The Simpsons- TV show (Fox NETWORK)
The Cook, The Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover- (Mirmax Film)
Psychic TV- Love, War, Riot "12" (Temple)
Freaks- In Sense Surround (Renaissance)
Close Lobsters- Headache Rhetoric (Rize)
The Marbles- Old From the Lack of Sleep
The Hypnotics- Liver Than God (Sub-app)
The Stone Roses- "Fools Gold" (Sweetone/RCM)

REVIEW BY JODI SHAPIRO

Poster Children
Flower Power
Limited Potential

Poster Children? Yeah, for the anti-BOF (boring old fart) association. Cool name. Cooler sound. I just missed these guys play live. That's my problem. Don't let it become yours. PC are three dudes and a dudette (Rose Marshak, bass) but don't scream 'SONIC YOUTH CLONES' (like some people have) cause they ain't. Rose says they sound "Sometimes loud, sometimes obnoxious, sometimes pretty." -yeah, that's it! Rick Jalestin and Jeff Dimpsey play guitar and Mike Radar bangs the drums. Each side of this disc is produced by a different dude, each showcasing a different aspect of the band. Side one (produced by Steve Albini) is crunchy bash and burn n'r, lotsa dense guitars. "Wanna" and "Eve" are standouts. Side two (produced by Iain Burgess) is sorta like novelty-punk, but "She Walks" is a welcome surprise. Both sides sound like they were recorded live, no overdubs, no techno bullshit. Eight songs is not enough, so the CD and cassette have 7 more...check out the first tape Toreador Squat and give generously to their cause-more worthy than Jenny's ass.

-Jodi Shapiro

MAIL MAIL MAIL

NOISE FOR HEROES MAG. CHECKS IN: TOO MUCH NOSTALGIA?

"It's funny, after spending my last four years chasing Australian rock with the Detroit metal influence (Stooges/MC5), in Big. T. I find what seems to be a near alter-ego who apparently started the same way I did (late 70's punk) but has seemingly stuck to tracking the British scene. I thought

your mag was about the best written fanzine I've ever seen (even better than Trouser Press, which is what I generally use as a standard). I really like the way your personality comes out in the thing...not as the dominating dictator of taste the way so many others do (Forced Exposure, for example), but as a voice with real empathy to the music. It's easy to say you like something; explaining why is the hard part, and that really came across well.

In the way of criticism, although I agree with what you said about not all nostalgia being bad, I thought this past issue (27) was a bit heavy with it...maybe that's not your normal way, but it struck me that way off one issue. I'm a little sensitive to it because we've had a particularly good run of young bands through San Diego recently and nobody has been going, yet DEBBY HARRY packed them in, THE RAMONES (who are pretty dull now) pack 'em in, THE CRAMPS (who are extra strength Sominex) sell out theaters, but all the great new bands are ignored. I think there are bands now that are as good as the classic punk bands, but it's hard to compare them because of the difference in context. Those '77 bands are legends so how can the new bands compete? But bands like CELIBATE RIFLES, NOMADS, LES THUGS, or FEEDTIME will be acknowledged in time like SLF, UNDERTONES, CLASH and WIRE are now."--STEVE GARDNER, NOISE FOR HEROES MAGAZINE, San Diego, CA

Ed: Your objection is well argued, and I can't say you're wrong. Last issue was heavy with it, and all my issues dwell to a certain extent on artists from the early punk + post/punk, late 60's or late 50's generations, the three most exciting periods of rock 'n' roll to date. This is a sensitive issue for me, one I give a great deal of thought to, and since you raise its ugly head, I'm forced to come forth with these continual deliberations. It's not an issue of coverage; I feel I try my best to discover and expose new and/or young talent that I think are worthy, and devote my space proportionally to those artists new, used, or old fogie, who thrilled me the most on stages and on my stereo.

The sensitive issue, though, is, do I play it safe? Am I biased towards old favorites to the extent that I discriminate against newer artists, or is it merely a case that I think the older artists in question are better? You say it's hard to compare, and you're correct, so the only basis of comparison for me is how many times I play the record, and how excited I got over the show. Perhaps I lean unfairly to the veterans, one can never be truly sure of one's motivation in these things, no matter how much honest soul searching one does! On the other hand, I can live with it; certainly giving the oldtimers space is a recognition of past good service that we try not to forget. For anti-nostalgia can also carry a tinge of "What have you done for me lately" which is deplorable. I.E., Undertones, SLF, Clash, and Wire have earned our continued interest. If we were big fans once, it's obvious any new vault recordings or reunion tours sound exciting to us. The reason artists like Harry Ramones, Cramps etc. pack 'em in is because people are still listening to their records and loving them, whether it's their current work, or more likely, their old work. Music doesn't die just 'cause it's no longer in the new bin, the record company isn't promoting it anymore, or the artist is gone. That's the truly remarkable quality of music, it endures in our hearts long after it's ceased to be a current event. That love generates ticket and record sales, no doubt about it, and I don't think that's ever wrong! Even if people



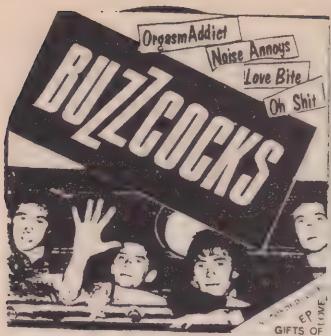
SUGARCUBES "Planet" RED TEMPLE SPIRITS 45

don't like a '89 sominex Cramps show (which is a matter of taste), maybe they'll still go home and listen to "Human Fly" or buy an old archives release of them, 'cause they still love the old stuff. It is the task of Les Thugs, feedtime, Nomads or whatever new young band you think is being ignored to generate that kind of love that can pack a house, just as those bands did when they were new! Even the Rolling Stones played to half empty houses on their '64 U.S. tour. And perhaps it's unfair to place all the blame on competition from the old; even without that competition there were always at any period of the last 35 years, great new talent few supported while the mediocre and the lame were popular. Life isn't fair, and that's why people like us start magazines, to try to help rectify our perceived injustices, or just try to spread the word better.

There were plenty of great bands in '77 who were ignored and weren't as popular as better hyped bands! Even Wire, who you list, and X-Ray Spex, who are also revered today, drew small crowds at their strings of '78 CBGB shows, while The Clash sold out the 3000 seat Palladium a few months later! Wire and X-Ray Spex became more famous after they were gone. Others never got their due, sadly, or were well-known then but are largely forgotten now like the great Ruts, who wouldn't get big bucks for a reunion tour now even if Malcolm Owen rose from the dead!

The whole thing of recognition and draw is arbitrary, based on luck, the whims of the record industry of the time, consumer tastes, musical climate, word of mouth etc. New bands with talent and greatness are a matter of taste, and everyone has a different idea of who's new and hot, and conversely, who is or isn't over the hill. I don't bother seeing PIL or Debby Harry gigs, but I wouldn't miss a Buzzcocks or SLF or '77 Damned reunion tour for the world! I might see a NY Les Thugs gig, if I felt like it, but would excitedly look forward to a Mega City 4 show. Everyone else makes these choices too, informed or otherwise! The bands you list may someday be more famous than Undertones, or they could fade away into oblivion like The Drones ('77), Action ('67) or Esquerita ('57) known only to people who dig past "legends." Time will tell. In the meantime, the real goal is merely to fill your life with (by your taste) great music, popular or unpopular, new or old. That's really the only criteria anyone should recognize and pay for.

Lastly, I did mention your concerns in that editorial last time, though perhaps not sufficiently. Nostalgia to me is always a two-headed monster, music and myth do not always mix well! And it's always hard for new artists to compete with already established acts, current or old! But that's no reason not to be thrilled when a rich past becomes



BUZZCOCKS Live at
Irving Plaza 7" boot



T.S.O.L. '81-'82
collection

present, and lately that's happened a lot! (see editorial #1 this issue) Thanks for your criticism, much to think about, isn't it?!

BUZZCOCKS EXCESSIVE?/CHAMELEONS-SUN + MOON SAD:

"As usual, issue #27 was excellent, though the Buzzcocks coverage might have been a bit excessive. I guess if anyone has earned the right to that kind of devotion and scrutiny however, The Buzzcocks are one of the few bands that deserve that kind of attention. I have a feeling that maybe the time is right for them to make a go of it one more time....It was the Chameleons/Sun and The Moon pieces that held the most interest for me. The conclusion of your Mark Burgess interview as well as the letters from Mark Burgess and Andy Clegg illustrated a side of bands that few people ever think of. It was sad to hear about all the difficulties the band had due to the personality conflicts of some very talented musicians. It's fun to think of all bands as having that 'Hard Days Night' aren't we having a great time sort of mentality, but the reality of having to deal with managers, contracts, record companies, as well as other external pressures makes that idealized band image even more remote. Too bad."--STEVE GRANADOS, Ithaca, NY

Ed: The media is only interested in success stories, or at least, in the formerly successful (particularly if they're making a comeback). In this country, we're only interested in the winners, when the truth is the average loser who tries his hardest is often far more interesting than the pampered, spoiled, gloating winner. Celebrityhood is a driveling passion, often having little to do with what they've given us in art. It's a goal of mine to document the experience of what it's like to be in a good band, most likely not in the charts and in the papers, precisely because we are always fed these pop stars on a glamorous joy ride, which is such a gross exception to the rule! We can be excused for not understanding the tremendous difficulty in keeping a good band together outside of the limelight, broke, bickering, ignored, and often impotent to effect change. Even the love of music cannot keep groups together in the face of their work being tossed whimsically on the music industry tempests, that's why the life span of groups, even those who make records and tours (i.e., get that far) is so sadly short. And even when you are successful, it's hard to keep diverse people united in a common goal and happy; the Beatles broke up despising each others guts, for instance! So much for Hard Days Night! Speaking of Beatles, Buzzcocks were/are our generation's Beatles music wise, no other pop group has come close in this regard, so it's impossible to be excessive! That they could come back so well after 8 years is also phenomenal! I should have done another 8 pages on 'em!

IN DEFENSE OF STEVE DIGGLE & F.O.C.

"Hey, I totally agree with you re: STEVE DIGGLE/FOC/BUZZCOOCKS "controversy" (the writer refers to an Alternative Press editorial questioning the prejudice for frontmen vis a vis the continued interest in Pete Shelley's good to poor solo work and the total lack of interest in Diggle's good to red hot work with F.O.C., hence his decision to change the name of the band to "Buzzcocks F.O.C." to attract the missing attention. The controversy was fortunately quashed by the original Buzzcocks' reformation, Diggle included, an event that was ironically enough hastened by Diggle's band's name change!). For my money, I'll take Diggle's "Pictures in my Mind" over any of Shelley's techno-pop, talented as he is, even though Homosapien was decent as a period piece. It's nice to see Diggle get a mention. On this, I became a subscriber. Also, looking forward to MARK BURGESS interview, since I've yet to read an interview with him. Anyone who interviews Burgess, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, DAMIEN O'NEILL, and ED KUEPPER in one issue is a cool guy."---FRED HARRING, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

Ed: I don't know if I'm cool (neato? rad? bad? happening? shakin? fab? gear?), but it seems our tastes greatly coincide over a variety of styles. Meeting such people is always a pleasure! Add "Exiles" to "Pictures in my Mind" and "Northwest Skyline" and it's amazing to me how such great Diggle work has been largely unheard by the die-hard Buzzcocks fans who've packed the reunion gigs, songs the Buzzcocks could have conceivably played and recorded. Ah, well, may I take this opportunity to refer you to the 2 1/2 hour interview (plus F.O.C. discography) we did with the sensational Mr. Diggle in issue 23? Sounds like you and all those like you would find it of great interest.

BUZZCOOCKS/NAKED RAYGUN CONNECTION:

"I really enjoyed the BUZZCOOCKS' show at the Ritz in November, and it was great to read your review of that show, it brought back some warm memories of the chills and thrills experienced from watching their super sonic assault. I also enjoyed the NAKED RAYGUN interview, it was great to hear about all the songs they've covered in the past, and the interview was funny."--RON LEDONNE, Bedford, New York

Ed: Yeah, Raygun should release a live covers LP someday, that would be a cracker.

YES, BUT DID PRINCE SEE THE BUZZCOOCKS?

"I really enjoyed your coverage of The BUZZCOOCKS tour. Having missed out on the punk/new wave movement firsthand, it was exciting to see them here in Minneapolis, where they put on one of the best shows I've ever seen. By the way, neither PRINCE nor REPLACEMENTS play at 1st Ave. club (where Buzzcocks played) any more, as you said. The Replacements now play arenas even in their home base, while Prince moved up to that level years ago, though he occasionally does impromptu gigs at clubs around town."--DARREN STRIKER, Minneapolis, MN

Ed: Too bad, that's a great club (Prince's live scenes from Purple Rain were even filmed there).

INK DISEASE MAG CHECKS IN II: SLF/UNDERTONES FUED:

BUZZCOOCKS at The Country Club here in L.A. was incredible. JOHN MAHER was so sick with flu that they only did one encore - 'Boredom,' even though the crowd screamed for more....Sorry to hear about the animosity between DAMIEN O'NEILL and SLF. I always figured they mutually respected each other. I'm almost positive I saw a poster of JAKE BURNS from the Now Then era, wearing a FEARGAL SHARKEY

button. Maybe that was just a bit of sarcasm, who knows? (ed: it was. That poster came with the LP by the way) But Damien's statement about S.L.F. being a "bunch of middle class student assholes" doesn't make too much sense. I dislike some 'middle class student assholes' as much as the next guy, but don't think that being "middle class" should bar them from trying to affect some change in the world. Ah, what do I know? At least I can like **UNDERTONES**, SLF and **THE PETROLS** if I want, and I do....A couple of **STRANGLERS** notes to add to your review of the BBC Sessions EP: JJ (ed: **BURNELL**) sings "The Man They Love to Hate." Also, the only other Peel Sessions to my knowledge were both from '77. The 1st is "Goodbye Toulouse"/"I Feel Like a Wog"/"Something Better Change"/"Hanging Around," the 2nd (8/18/77) is "Burning Up Time"/"Bring on The Nubiles"/"No More Heroes"/"Deadringer."--**BRIAN TRUDELL, INK DISEASE MAGAZINE, L.A., California**

Ed: In fact, many U.S. reviews, of Undertones and S.L.F. tended to lump the two together, since they were the only Irish punk groups to really attract attention here, and they were contemporaries. But Derry isn't Belfast, Protestant isn't Catholic, and for whatever reason, the common assumption that the two must (have) like (liked) each other couldn't be (have been) more false! As to the causes for this, aside from what Damien said (and SLF narrowly avoided saying), I don't know, but suffice to say the dislike was never a secret! Quite a few readers commented on the "juxtaposition" (John Kezdy of Effigies word) of the SLF and O'Neill interviews consecutively. Lest I seem conniving, the O'Neill interview was set up without knowledge that two months later I'd also interview Burns and **HENRY CLUNEY** of SLF, and I thought it as pertinent to ask Burns and Cluney the same question, because current fans are unaware of the past situation. I omitted any reference to what O'Neill had already said so as to avoid that "press warfare" that persists when writers go around saying "did you hear what he said about you?," but the placement of the interviews side by side was indeed intentional! Point/counterpoint? O'Neill's "middle-class" reference was a means of calling them phonies, questioning their sincerity, believing their radical stance an affectation, without a genuine desire to "affect change."

MTV POST MODERN, CDs AND MORE:

I'll have to agree with you about **STONE ROSES**. Finally a band that lives up to the hype. The British press make such a big deal out of everything, like **WONDER STUFF** who really aren't that brilliant. But they were right this time....About the CD controversy. About prices, I can agree with you, though I can find CDs for only a buck more than new tapes and records. Of course, they are horribly overpriced in 99% of stores, and I would be horribly annoyed if they took records away. There should be a choice....Next, 120 Minutes/Post Modern. Both programs show increasingly commercial videos, but they're better than **BON JOVI** or **NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK** nightmare videos. Experience has shown it's as good a starting point as any. Once someone hears something they like that's outside, if only barely, the mainstream, it opens up a whole new world of musical possibilities. People realize there's good music away from radio and major labels. And once you're addicted, there's no going back!--**TIFFANY SCHNEIDER, Plymouth, Minnesota**

Ed: Agreed. The amazing thing is, aside from a few local stations like KROQ in L.A., late 70's WPIX & early 80's WLIR in NY, there was no commercial

(i.e. other than college radio) exposure of alternative music on radio, in the press, and only a stray Saturday Night Live appearance on TV. I still remember being crucified in Jan. of '79 for wearing a **TALKING HEADS** t-shirt to school after seeing them play the night before. "What kind of name for a band is that! That's stupid!" Now, ten years later, alternative music is available to the whole country via two MTV shows, it's no longer such an alien commodity!. It amazes me. 90% of the good stuff will never make those shows, but that 10% could lead people to what's hiding below, that's a powerful window to jump through!

BIG TAKEOVER KING OF THE HILL:

"Of all the music mags I read - Chemical Imbalance, Your Flesh, Forced Exposure, Motorbooty, Flipside, Option, No Idea, The Bob, whew! Maybe I should read a book or something once in a while! - Big T. is the most fun to read. The others may look better, but yours is the best written. This is in the end what makes it the best. Anyway, I really enjoyed your work editorial - amen - and your **CHAMELEONS** + **BUZZCOCKS** stories. I must admit the latter made me tear my hair out 'cause I missed their L.A. shows, I was away. Argh! Also thanks for inspiring me to get into Chameleons and **STONE ROSES**, both are good and a good change from my more usual noise + punk type stuff. I recommend **LAZY COWGIRLS** and **CREAMERS**, also good are **MIRACLE WORKERS**, all from out here."--**RYDER GREENE, Sherman Oaks, California**

Ed: No comment on the other mags, but thanks for the praise. Shucks! I heard Buzzcocks L.A. show at Santa Monica Civic Center with **BAD RELIGION** was one of the less impressive gigs, but I wasn't there, so I don't know. If I had a musical wish, it might be that everyone who reads Big. T. bought the Chameleons LPs, they've given such a great amount of joy and have never worn despite hundreds of plays. Always pleased to get a letter like this!

GOODBYE DAMNED, KUDOS TO TIM SOMMER:

I just finished my first issue. I must say it's a radical change from the poor excuse for quality information on alternative music available now. Through your publication, I'm now hearing of bands such as **DIDJITS**, **COMSAT ANGELS** and the like. I'm starving for a good alternative diet. Now, do you mind if I waste a bit of space venting some raging frustration? Doesn't anyone care that **THE DAMNED** broke up? I admit they have done some unbelievably lame music, but still!....I envy you on three levels. 1) You know **TIM SOMMER** whom I admire greatly, 2) You went to England, and 3) You get great photography assignments! Also, thank you for the hand written, personal reply, it was unexpected and made my year. Don't worry, your efforts with BT are greatly appreciated. Lastly, I just want to take a moment and let you know how sorry I am for the loss of your great aunt. Hang in there.--**KRISTIN MULLINS, Harrison, Ohio**

Ed: I do miss Aunt Mina, thank you, she was special. It's great to see Tim Sommer get fan mail. Tim has an infinite capacity for self-deprecating humor, so take that Tim! If it makes you feel better, I'm sorry to see Damned go; though I didn't like their last LP, they made some incredible ones, and even at their worst they were entertaining live, at their best they were a knockout. R.I.P.! I should do an editorial marking my sadness over their passing, but somehow their farewell shows I believe did one for me. Thanks for the sincere appreciation, it humbles me with silent emotion.

DEATH TO RAP, THE WORST "DANCE MUSIC"

"The continued growth of rap and hip hop is really sad. All it seems too bland to me. All beat and no rhythm. No soul. I don't understand the coolness of samples and scratching. As for all this I'd rather stick to Motown, James Brown and Jazz and Blues for "black music." Strangely, the 80's began anti-disco now everyone is back into it....I'm glad to tell you **THE NILS** have reformed. Expect a new lineup and slightly new direction. (ed: CARLOS SORIA left Montreal's Nils last year to move to L.A. and team up with ex-M.I.A. leader MIKE CONLEY in a new band **NAKED SOUL**) Really enjoy LOU REED's latest New York. I'm disappointed that the **REPLACEMENTS** and **BOB MOULD** don't have R.E.M. success yet....My favorite LPs of '89 were BUZZCOOKS' ROIR tape, Reed's, JOHN LEE HOOKER, CLARENCE GATEMOUTH BROWN, BOB DYLAN, 10,000 MANIACS, COWBOY JUNKIES and a cassette by a local band CITRUS PARK whose singer STEVEN is a brother of MARK BANDOLA of The LUCY SHOW....I guess I really got fed up with 80's rock. By and large careerism and financial strategy has killed the art in rock. This may be the real reason that these days I see films, read and listen to blues and jazz more than rock. Hopefully the 90's will see the death of sequencer abuse. More art and craftsmanship. More real emotion!--WARREN GSCHAID, CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA

Ed: Morrissey called rap "urban thuggery" and he may have hit on something. To me it's just a new machismo, an ill that's responsible for much of world problems already, and I agree with you it's musically bankrupt. Most critics today, judging from the Pazz and Jop poll, think Rap is the most important music (Christgau even called it the "new punk" which is ludicrous). Run DMC and Public Enemy sold more records in a week than almost any punk band has in their lives), so those of us who demand tune and melody with our beat, and who think that self-important swaggering is no substitute for some genuine, honest thinking must be complete idiots in their world of hip-dom. I agree, a Robert Johnson or Jimmy Reed record, as simple as they sing, says 80,000 times more than most rap "songs" and you might even be tempted to sing along. Rap artists mostly are talking, not singing, perhaps rhythmically, but they are not "singers," at best they are poets, and their style is creative but sonically boring and it's not exactly Ginsberg is it?!! Agreed as well on the rest of your analysis, great news about Nils!:

PENGUINS FANS HAVE NO USE FOR ROLLING STONE OR SPIN!:

I've all but used up my patience with all of the other Rock 'n' Roll magazines (Spin, Rolling Stone, musician, etc.). Your mag contains more info than 150 Rolling Stones put together....I got the 13 Songs CD by **FUGAZI** and the album just kicks ass. hope like hell they come within 150 miles of here....One more thing, Jack, as a die hard Penguins fan, I would never think to rub it in on how the Pens smoked the Rangers 4 straight in the playoffs last year. I've got too much class for that!--DAVE HOWLING, ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA Ed: Yeah, well what good did it do them, they lost the next round (to the Flyers, right?) anyway! Besides, that was the first time in my life I rooted against the Rangers, in protest over General Manager Phil Esposito firing coach Bergeron a week before the playoffs began. Esposito sure deserved the ax he got soon thereafter. And listen to you crow! I'd hate to see how you'd act if your team actually learned how to play defense! As for your comments about Big T., may you win 1000 lotteries, 16 trifectas and 14 office football pools. You could make me all but cry saying things like that. Shucks. (blush)

BRING BACK THE CHAMELEONS!

There is no doubt in my mind that those of us who have experienced the **CHAMELEONS** phenomenon have been witness to a great musical accomplishment of our time. In my opinion there hasn't been another band with their ability to create such atmospheres through music. I know I'm not the only one to feel as if **MARK BURGESS** was writing about exactly what I was thinking and feeling! High praise for a great band. For this reason it is a shame they were unable to continue. Perhaps they were doomed from the beginning. One cannot ignore the footnote of Script of The Bridge: 'We are the Chameleons and this is our first LP; perhaps we will make another. Who knows? Not me.' In the case of Burgess, his obvious passion will remain unequaled. As a true fan it leads me to believe that his intense creative energies became even counter productive in the increasingly volatile situation they band became as described in your interview. Unfortunately in life great things never seem to last. Fortunately, their music will remain always. I have a profound respect for their abilities and wish them the best. I wish that their differences could be worked out and once again we all would have The Chameleons!"--ANDREW HERSHBERGER, Kent, Ohio

Ed: Obviously I agree completely with your Don Kirshner like comments! Can't imagine Chameleons will ever reunite, not only because one or more of the members loathes Mark, but because even if that is conciliated over time, their cult status would have to increase to create the kind of demand that usually leads to reunions. But you never know; today's hostility is sometimes tomorrow's "who cares," sometimes not! Don't read too much in that comment on the first LP though. That was more wonderment about finishing the project, and a sober, honest assessment of (as you say) great things not lasting. As it is, they did make 2 1/2 more, so historically the answer was yes, they would. But it is possible that each's great intensity led to such a violent and sudden end, though that's true of most bands, their survival rate is minimal. The message is: appreciate great things while they last, at any moment they can vanish!

ANOTHER MARK BURGESS FAN RESPONDS:

Ever since hearing Strange Times at my friend's in Wash. DC I've been hooked/obsessed with the wall of sound the **CHAMELEONS** produce. But I've never read anything about the band or **THE SUN AND THE MOON** in any publication. so I stood alone... waiting...for some news. Until I saw your mag at Pier Platters in Hoboken. What an interview! It was disappointing and a bit painful to digest all the shit Mark Burgess and co. had to put up with. It was not surprising considering the lyrics in his music. At the end of the first part of the interview, Mark's divulgance (writer's word) in his "profound belief" that the Chameleons were the greatest is just like I feel. It is not easy for me to put in words how I feel about the band but there is an undeniable power with harmony, deep/meaningful lyrics, layers of guitars, riveting drums, melodic synth, all creating an almost hypnotic effect. I'm always one who believes in a full sound. After reading the reviews of **REEGS** I must go and get their records, I'm hooked on "Pond Life" on WNYU. Great bands I listen to presently include **HOUSE OF LOVE**, **STONE ROSES**, **BREATHLESS**, **GALAXIE 500**, **KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION**, **JACK RUBIES**. Thanks again for the mag, a real experience!--WAYNE GUSKIND, ENGLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY

ed: This is a good description of what Chameleons gave the world. Maybe I should ask this guy to write reviews for us, looks like he knows his stuff!

LONG LIVE KICKBOY FACE:

5 years ago for our fifth anniversary issue, we ran pictures of Wire, Buzzcocks, and Damned playing late 70's N.Y. shows and a photo of the outrageous clothes of The Weirdos, to show the inspiration for the mag. This time, we should single out the writer that most impressed us back then and helped stir us to get going. I have often cited Kickboy Face (real name CLAUDE BESSY) as being the greatest of them all. Unfortunately, his writing in *Slash* is unavailable now. The mag folded in favor of the now established record label, and the cut of print back issues are expensive collector items. With that in mind, we reprint here some of our favorite reviews so you can appreciate his burning style, his imagination, his ability to arouse! Unlike most writers before or since, he understood the importance of breathing life into print, to feel the sensation of the music, not to write a scholarly treatise on the lyrical content alone (as if sound and fury is inconsequential), nor a static, academic sociological examination. Bessy was the emotion of music, as you'll see here! He wrote amazing editorials and features too, but his record reviews ring the loudest today. Someday I'd like to interview him, I just missed meeting him twice back then. His friend Howard Devoto says he's in Spain these days, maybe someday!



THE WEIRDOS
Bomp Records
(Destroy All Music / Life of Crime/
Why do you exist?)

Now all you skeptics and snickerers can swallow your pride and admit it: this is one of the hottest singles to come out in a long long time, no matter which way you look at it. The Weirdos have put on vinyl all the crazed excitement of their live appearances plus lots more that always gets lost in those three-most-fingers-in-the-air-and-the-rest-of-the-body-twitching moments.

"Destroy All Music" is fast with great drumming and manic lead guitar fillers that pierce your brain in between John's growls and shouts. But side 2 is definitely of an even-higher caliber. This is the side that I play constantly, first thing when I wake up, perfect to get the sleep out of your head in ten seconds. Starts with that already classic Weirdos riff, the one that has the kids jumping up and down in ecstasy two seconds after it starts, perhaps their most popular song after "I'm Not Like You" and "Do the Dance," the infamous "Life of Crime."

To all of you who for some feeble reason have never experienced it, let me just say it features the already mentioned exquisitely sloppy riff, some amazing moronic grunts and other lobotomized noises by the singer and the most devastating off the wall harmonies by Dave and Cliff. Don't even try to understand why it works. The magic of the Weirdos is something that one day will have the experts working and analyzing for long frustrating hours. "Just can't figure it out, Hank, separately it's just a bunch of chords and noises and junk, put it together and it drives them wild..." A true challenge to modern science, this sound is. And it ends with my personal favorite, the supersonic "Why do you exist?". I mean it's so fast it hurts. The playing is remarkable, the singing breathless. Why do I exist? For this kind of music. But is the world ready for the Weirdos?

Kickboy "Spread the word" Face



THE AVENGERS
Dangerhouse
(We're the ones / I believe in me / Car Crash)

San Francisco's only hope for the future. And the future is what it's all about. Unusual positive anthem (yep, another one) expressing total confidence in who's worth what and who's gonna be in charge soon. I'm talking about "We're the ones," an honest to godness modern youth statement with the perfect vague-enough philosophy behind which countless outcasts and left-outs can rally. "We are not Jesus Christ, we are not fascist pigs, we are not communists, we're the ones." Penelope and the band make you believe in it so much you'll be hoping for a revolution, any kind of revolution, by the time it's over. The fucking music drives you to it.

"I believe in me" is good, with intriguing buried ramblings by Penelope, all of it sounding nasty and very aggressive and the chorus is fine until the repetition starts getting you.

But B-side is the gem, the (the) masterpiece that you won't be able to shake off. "Car crash" is a beautiful mournful (and that does not mean limp-wristed) tragic tune with Penelope's voice giving you goose bumps as she tells her tale of blood and death. It is both matter of fact and romantic, cynical and idealistic, the music is as powerful as the subject matter and the chorus, with Penelope and some extra voices moaning the unforgettable "oooh woo woo no no, nononono nononono no no" will fucking haunt you for many nights to come, supposing, that is, that you have any life left in you at all. Imagine "Leader of the Pack" done in a thoroughly modern new wave approach, not the style but the gut feeling of the song. Can you? Can you???

Kickboy Face



THE DILS

What Records
(I hate the rich / You're not blank)

Softies don't bother. This is strictly for the committed. Super brief super fast super violent rage anthem by our most politico locals. The opening chords of "I hate the rich" are enough to tell you you're in for a rough ride. The drums come in with that great bouncing riff that lasts throughout the song. Chip's rhythm chords fall on top of it. I hate the rich is spat out more than actually sung, and the rest is just one choppy relentless scream of anger at everyone. "I hate the rich. I hate the poor. I hate them all," and don't tell me it's just nihilistic nonsense. What is being hated with such conviction by the amazing trio is money (and lack of it) which has turned everyone into zombies and horrible living clichés. It is what we all feel when we realize how little control we have over our own fucking lives and how small our chances of ever being free. This song is a musical graffiti. It is meant to bother and disturb. It is punk stuff at its purest, most admirable form. I play it constantly. I hum it in my sleep.

B side is almost as good, with once again great drumming by Endre, fine bass (although buried) by Tony and super clashing chords by Chip, who also manages a breathtaking vocal break and condensed solo, like an exacerbated capsule of musical tricks reduced to their essence, something to be done away with before the real stuff starts. And this record was done totally independently, bypassing the usual channels and keeping all its life and intensity intact. The perfect example of what the future may have in store for us, if we are lucky.

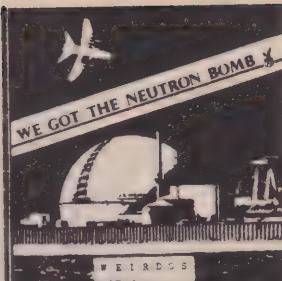
Kickboy Face



MAGAZINE
Virgin Import
(Shot by both sides / My mind ain't so open)

"Shot by both sides" is incredible. The song is a long, long way from Spiral Scratch, and many who worshipped that single's elemental manic drive will be confused and will feel cheated, which would be stupid, as it simply is another music, more structured, less skin surface, but certainly as intense and grabbing. Devoto doesn't even sound like the same man, his voice is deeper, older, nastier. The band behind plays exceptionally well, the guitar and drums melting into each other, taking off (with restraint), coming back to the melodic line to join Howard for the final attack. Less punk in the cliche sense of the term, but infinitely rich and rewarding. Other song is too freaky-experimental for my ears. It's built to repel and make you cringe. It works. I bet the Deadbeats love it. "My mind ain't so open" that anything can crawl in." Very true. But A-side alone is well worth getting this record. If Mr. Devoto does not go funny in the head and retire to a very private world of his own (Virgin already informed us that he had chosen to avoid all interviews and other distasteful procedures from now on), he may become one of the most important creators on the new scene. If he does (go funny), he has already achieved a minor key position in the punk mythology.

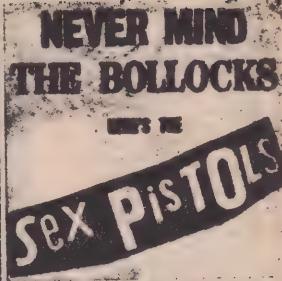
Kickboy Face



THE WEIRDOS
Dangerhouse
(We got the neutron bomb / Solitary confinement)

First definite "political" song from L.A.'s finest, it will prove once and for all that the Weirdos have hardly begun to do it to us. Wall of noise, back-up vocals, manic protest from extraterrestrial John Denney ("We don't want it, we don't want it") that will go unheard until it is too late, a song to be played within everyone's earshot until they bleed, begging for mercy from the noble punk guerrillas. Holocaust music, doomsday bells. We got the bomb, we got the Weirdos, what a time of mixed blessings. "Solitary confinement" standard Weirdos clenched teeth stuff, yeah, they'll probably all put us away some day if we don't shut up.

Kickboy Face



NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS, HERE'S THE SEX PISTOLS
Virgin Import or Warner Brothers

Do they mean never mind all the shit you've heard about this group, the hype, the filthy reports and the hateful innuendos, here's the music, here's the sound they're all dying from, here's the stuff they can't take? Probably. Unless they simply mean never mind fancy covers and pics, here's the package, no frills, no effort, listen to it or get fucked. Here's the Sex Pistols

The English release that first came out is missing one song, "Submission," apparently added on after an initial run of a few thousand copies. Only heard "Submission" once so I can't really say anything about it. The rest is the same, and that I listened to already so many times I don't even need the fucking album anymore. Just a little memory click and it's all there in its unbelievable splendor. This is such a mother of an album I could drool just trying to convey its multi-faceted beauty to you.

Four of the songs everyone already knows by heart. Yet they are in no way the highlights of the LP, the others may actually be better in every way. They are "Seventeen," "Bodies," "New York," "EMI," "Liar," "No feelings" and "Problems." Every one of those unheard before tunes is so tight, so packed with obsessed energy, so unbelievably raw and essential in its sound that it will either make you revise your musical standards faster than anything you've heard in the past ten years or send you shivering in a corner with the sudden fear of tomorrow. Any other reaction will only be a simple and pathetic defense mechanism devised by your own chickshits to protect you from the truth. For this is the sound punk rock has been promising us, this is what has been hinted at, flirted with and finally dodged by the past few chaotic months of musical experimentation. From the righteous outrage of "Liar" to the sarcastic egocentric strutting of "No feelings," from the vicious psychological warfare of "Seventeen" to the anti brotherhood-sympathy manifesto of "Problems," Rotten and his gang attack every one of our soft spots, every little nook and cranny where somewhere we have kept a few comfortable notions and illusions of good life and easy goings. Nothing is spared, from girl friend to big corporation. Especially not even oneself. This is the most lucid vision rock music has given us in a long time, and it will generate a lot of hate and resentment because of it.

The music is scary in its precision and power, with the drums and guitars burning their way through your head as napalm through the jungle but it is Rotten's voice and stance that make any comparison useless. The shifty little character has to be the most mesmerizing visionary ever produced by the underworld of rock 'n' roll, an unholy prophet of instant unavoidable nihilism, the common voice of everyone's darker side. It's not often one can taste honesty seeping through one's latest album, and it's not often one can feel grateful for such a load of so-called nasty immature and self-destructive emotions.

Even if the Pistols were to disappear tomorrow the music world would never be the same. It may take a while for the scars to show but they are permanent. One funny little group's first album and suddenly there must be more than 10 to 20 acknowledged professional outfits marked for oblivion. Relevance is an elusive thing, as the ones in high places are about to learn. They are all liars, liars, liars

Kickboy Face

Malcolm Owen dead

MALCOLM OWEN is dead.

The body of The Ruts' 24-year-old singer was discovered in the bath at his parents' Middlesex home on Monday afternoon. Although no official cause of death has yet been announced, the news follows reports of his leaving the group due to the continuing problem of his drug addiction. The split was to have been officially announced at the end of this week.

On Monday morning Owen phoned a friend, arranged to go for a lunchtime drink, then decided to take a bath. When the friend arrived at about 1.15, Owen's parents said he was still in the bath. He failed to respond to their calls, so they forced the door, and found him in "an unrousable state". An ambulance was summoned and Owen was taken to Hillingdon Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

A post-mortem inquest on Tuesday morning could establish no cause of death. A drug scan was to be performed for laboratory analysis, and the inquest was adjourned to a date to be fixed after police enquiries and the lab analysis have been completed.

The most recent recording the tragic lad had seen Owen make determined efforts to overcome his addiction — the initial reason for his returning to live with his parents while the rest of the band continued working, notably with reggae artist Laurel Aitken.

Despite the optimism which he'd expressed when talking to NME at the end of



Malcolm Owen, April 1980. Pic: JILL FURMANOWSKY.

April, in the past two weeks his efforts proved ultimately unsuccessful. It was decided that he should leave the group. A solo career was planned.

The Ruts will presumably continue as intended, although at the moment the band members are said to be "too shocked" to consider their future.

A single, recorded with Owen a month ago and

entitled "West One", was scheduled for release by Virgin in early August. It's yet to be decided whether the record will appear as planned.

Always renowned for the vitality of their stage-show, Owen and The Ruts were amongst the foremost punk acts to emerge in the 77/78 era. Their album "The Crack" appeared in 1979 and featured the band's best-selling single "Babylon Burning".



Bye bye Buzzcocks L-R: Steve Garvey, Steve Diggle, Pete Shelley, John Maher.

BUZZCOCKS have split. Final confirmation of the news came with the announcement by group manager Richard Boon of New Hormones that Pete Shelley left the band with effect from March 6.

By way of explanation, Shelley has offered the comment "I left the band to become a Social Democrat" — but more importantly, it's known that he is already in the process of recording some solo material, with a view to launching a new career, possibly working with other musicians on an occasional basis.

The remaining three Buzzcocks — Steve Diggle, John Maher and Steve Garvey —

Buzzcocks split
by PAUL DU NOYER

are officially still under contract to EMI, but their plans are far from certain at the moment. EMI are currently considering their position with regard to the group: their decision will rest upon the new material, if any, which the remaining three offer them.

John Maher, as previously reported, will in any case be spending the immediate future as one of The Invisible Girls, Pauline Murray's group. Steve Garvey, too, has plans to play with other musicians, at least on an informal basis. But the general uncertainty is compounded by various

legal problems which have yet to be resolved.

Dissatisfaction with the group's musical progress is cited as the chief reason for the break-up — a feeling which was shared by all in the band for some time — and Shelley's decision to leave has not come as a complete surprise. According to Richard Boon, matters have not been helped by the original record company United Artists whose employees, over the course of their absorption into EMI, have been unable to devote sufficient attention to the group.

Although confessing himself saddened by the split, Boon also describes it as "one of the most exciting things they've done" in terms of their potential to develop away from the atmosphere of Buzzcocks, which was becoming stifling for all concerned.

THE TWO SADDEST DAYS IN OUR 10 YEARS: R.I.P. Malcolm Owen. The remaining Ruts D.C. soldiered on for another two years and finally split to little notice. They were probably equally good as Ruts, but Malcolm was the centerpiece of their popularity, and their very close friend besides. Buzzcocks happily reformed last year, making the 2nd news item a little more palatable in retrospect! Hope they keep it going.

the

were frogs

112

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JACK RABID



THE MISFITS
(Bullet) We are/Attitude/Hollywood
Babylon)
Plan 9 Records

Fuck do I love this record. Lethal explosion of metal onslaught, with sentiments to match. Devastating attack of the possessed barbarians, frightening and truly inspiring at the same time. The only group in L.A. heading in that direction is Fear, whose record is in no way close to such clenched teeth brutality but whose live performance matches the Misfits' sound in powerful meanness. All 4 songs are pretty awesome but 'Bullet' (a poetic-politico reflection on a certain historical incident in Dallas) and "Attitude" are spine chilling killers. This is the stuff the Dead Boys and other puppets wished they were made of. Dipsits beware, this music leaves stains on well balanced brains. Also note the exquisitely tasteful cover, a real liberal's delight.

Kick Face

X
Dangerhouse
(We're Desperate/Adult Books)

Giving a measly X single to an X addict like myself is like giving a jukie a spoon to lick, it will be greedily grabbed but in no way will it satisfy the burning need. Both sides have already been played hundreds of times, the tunes ricochet around the walls of my head night and day. John and Exene's combined wails are haunting my most innocent moments. I lust with some people call me a creep or - all in a line in the most unlikely situations. I am indeed truly hooked. Some songs are just songs you can love them or leave them. Others are visions, jagged chunks of something bigger, more meaningful, more important. It's vague and it's confused but it's there. The record does not convey the fury and the passion that X carry on stage but there is enough there to feed one's imagination and one's curiosity. What is really needed now are a whole bunch of X songs (that's called an album—Ed.) so we all can get a better view of that elusive vision they're having at here. And of course everyone to just might become one of the greatest American bands of the decade.

CAROLINE PARI



SUMISHTA BRAHM

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

"Though authors are touchy about their productions and inclined to resent unfavorable criticism, they are seldom self-satisfied. They are conscious how far their work on which they've spent much time and trouble comes short of their conception, and when they consider it are much more vexed with their failure to express this in its completeness than pleased with the passages here and there that they can regard with complacency. Their aim is perfection, and they are wretchedly aware that they have not attained it."

M. SOMERSET MAUGHAM, his later forward to *OF HUMAN BONDAGE*, 1915.

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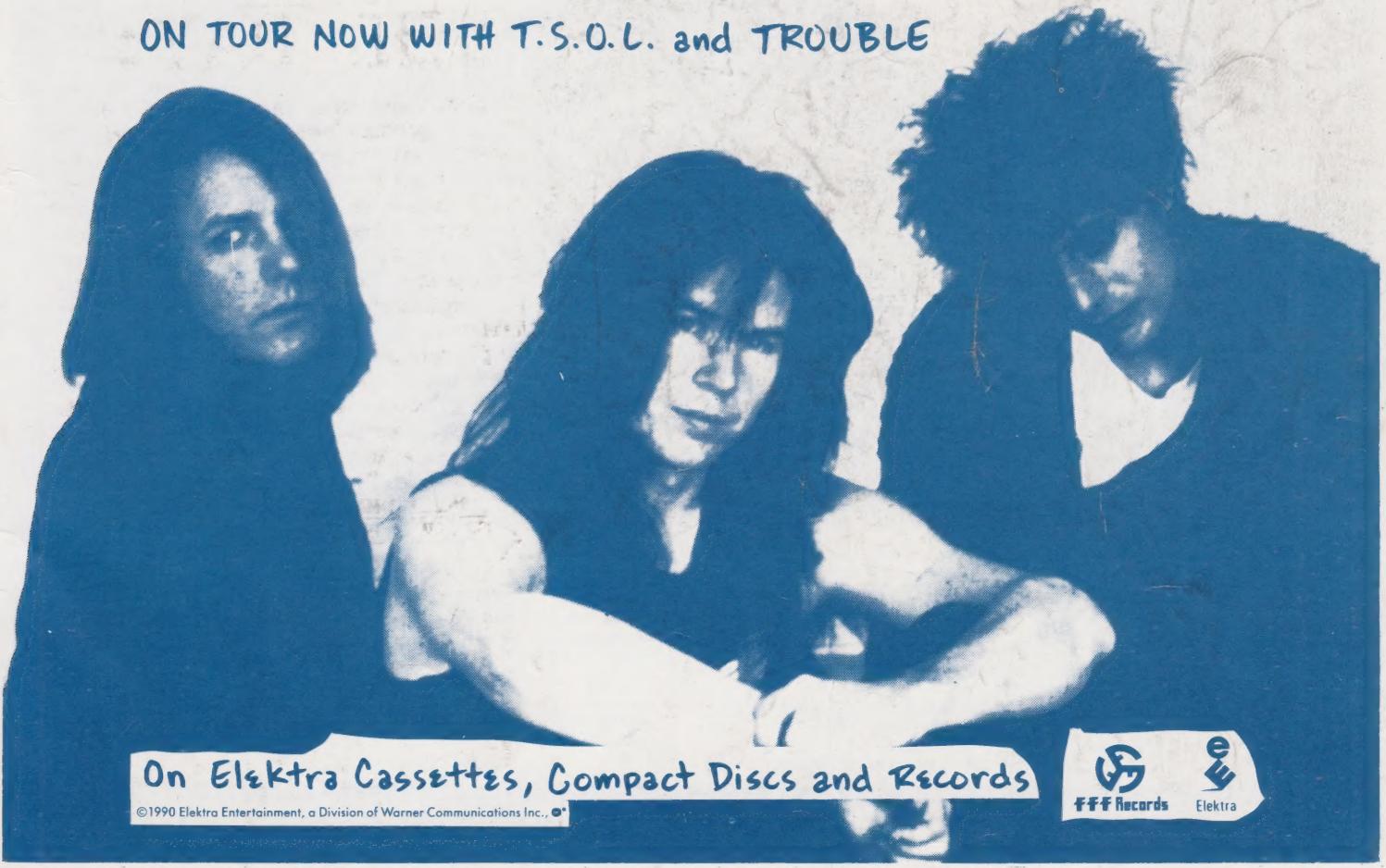
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